

Großmacht Rußland? Erfahrungen, Perspektiven, Optionen

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Dezember 1995

Heinrich Vogel/Hans-Henning Schröder (Hrsg.)

Großmacht Rußland?

Erfahrungen, Perspektiven, Optionen

Sonderveröffentlichung des BIOst 1996

Vorwort

von Heinrich Vogel/Hans-Henning Schröder

Die vorliegende Sonderveröffentlichung geht auf eine Tagung mit dem Thema "Großmacht Rußland? Erfahrungen, Perspektiven, Optionen" zurück, die das Bundesinstitut für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien am 16. und 17. November 1995 gemeinsam mit dem Planungsstab des Auswärtigen Amtes durchführte. Fachleute aus Rußland, Frankreich, den USA, Großbritannien und Deutschland diskutierten die Rolle des heutigen Rußland in der internationalen Politik.

Die Russische Föderation ist auf lange Sicht ein wichtiger Partner Deutschlands in Europa und der Welt. Sowohl bei der Gestaltung des europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sicherheitsraumes, als auch bei der Erarbeitung von Lösungen für Probleme, die den europäischen Raum überschreiten, wird die Bundesrepublik immer wieder auf die Zusammenarbeit mit Rußland angewiesen sein.

Die Partnerschaft ist derzeit erheblichen Belastungen ausgesetzt, die sich nicht zuletzt aus der schwierigen inneren Lage Rußlands erklären. Dort hat sich in den letzten Jahren ein neues politisches System mit einer neuen Führungsschicht etabliert, die erst ihren Platz in der internationalen Politik sucht. Auf der Suche nach einer nationalen Identität und nach Grundmustern eines nationalen politischen Konsens greift die Elite auf traditionelle Vorstellungen zurück. In der sowjetischen wie in der vorsowjetischen Zeit gehörte Rußland stets zum Kreis der Weltmächte. Seit den siebziger Jahren verstand sie sich als die "andere Supermacht" neben den USA. Ohne sie konnte keine Entscheidung von globaler Bedeutung getroffen werden. Die postsowjetische politische Elite hält an der Vorstellung fest, daß Rußland eine Weltmacht ist. Bisher wurde nicht ernsthaft reflektiert, was der Zerfall der UdSSR und die Auflösung des bipolaren Weltsystems für die künftige Rolle Rußlands bedeutet. Der wirtschaftliche Niedergang und die Unfähigkeit, technologisch Schritt zu halten, die Unfähigkeit, die militärischen Kapazitäten aufrechtzuerhalten, stellen Rußlands Weltmachtrolle aber entschieden in Frage. Die Spannung zwischen Anspruch und realen Möglichkeiten schlägt sich in der unklaren und wenig rationalen Politik Rußlands gegenüber dem Westen nieder und belastet auch die deutsch-russischen Beziehungen.

Die Tagung des Bundesinstitutes hatte es sich zum Ziel gesetzt, dieses Problem im Gespräch mit Wissenschaftlern und Politikberatern aus Rußland, Frankreich, Großbritannien und den USA zu erörtern, die Diskussion über die Rolle Rußlands in der Welt zu versachlichen und auf der Arbeitsebene einen Dialog zwischen russischen und westlichen Experten einzuleiten. Den Rahmen für diese Diskussion steckt der Beitrag von Hans-Peter Schwarz ab, der den Begriff "Großmacht" und seinen Wandel im Kontext der Entwicklung des internationalen Systems des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts analysiert. Die historische Dimension der russischen Großmachtvorstellung und ihre realen Grenzen im 20. Jahrhundert behandelt Hannes Adomeit, der den Nie-

dergang der Supermacht Sowjetunion in den siebziger und achtziger Jahren darstellt und die Ursachen für ihren Niedergang untersucht. Die folgenden vier Beiträge setzen sich dann mit der gegenwärtigen Lage Rußlands auseinander. Gerhard Simon thematisiert die Reflexe der traditionellen Großmachtrolle im Selbstverständnis der heutigen russischen Politik. Sergej Aleksashenko analysiert demgegenüber die wirtschaftlichen und technologischen Ressourcen, auf die sich Rußlands Außenpolitik stützen kann. Archie Brown untersucht die "politischen" Ressourcen - die Entwicklung demokratischer Institutionen, rechtsstaatlicher Vorstellungen und neuer Werthaltungen -, die Rußland den Dialog mit der Außenwelt erleichtern könnten. Dmitrij Trenin schließlich setzt sich mit jener Dimension auseinander, auf die sich traditionell der russische/sowjetische Anspruch auf eine Großmachtrolle stützte - den militärischen Ressourcen. Überlegungen Klaus-Peter Klaibers zum Umgang mit der Großmacht Rußland schließen den Band ab.

Die Voraussetzungen für die erfolgreiche Arbeit der Konferenz, die durch die hier abgedruckten Beiträge eingeleitet wurde, wurden durch enge Abstimmung in Fragen der Konzeption und großzügige materielle Unterstützung entschieden verbessert, die das Auswärtige Amt und das Bundesministerium für Verteidigung gewährt haben. Den Verantwortlichen in beiden Häusern gilt unser aufrichtiger Dank.

Großmacht - der analytische Rahmen

von Hans-Peter Schwarz

Der Begriff "Großmacht" hat in der Geschichte der internationalen Beziehungen zumeist in zweierlei Hinsicht Verwendung gefunden: er war - *erstens* - eine Kategorie zur Bezeichnung des *Status* in der Staatengesellschaft und er war - *zweitens* - eine analytische Kategorie zur Erfassung des Machtpotentials, der Willensimpulse und des Selbstverständnisses staatlicher Akteure. Natürlich hängt die Statuskategorie und der mehr analytische verwandte Begriff Großmacht miteinander zusammen. Potentiale, machtpolitische Triumphe und machtpolitisches Wollen haben häufig zur Legitimation des Anspruchs geführt, der "internationalen Aristokratie" (Georg Schwarzenberger) anzugehören. Aber beides ist nicht dasselbe.

Ich möchte mich im folgenden der Aufgabe entziehen, umständlich zu diskutieren, ob "Großmacht" noch eine sinnvolle analytische Kategorie ist, da ich sehr daran zweifle. Macht in den internationalen Beziehungen ist ein sehr, sehr relativer Begriff. Macht kann sich auf unterschiedlichste Faktoren auf seiten der Akteure gründen, wozu Wirtschaftsmacht, kulturelle Ausstrahlung, administrative Kompetenz, Beschaffenheit des politischen Systems und vieles mehr gehören.

Macht ist zudem ein relativer Begriff, weil die Machtmöglichkeiten eines Landes vom näheren und weiteren internationalen Umfeld abhängen. Dort entscheidet sich vielfach, ob die Macht des jeweiligen Landes auf Gegenmacht stößt, ob Allianzen möglich sind, ob die Partner bereit sind, ein Land in ihre Integrationsgemeinschaften aufzunehmen. Zur Macht gehört eben nicht nur das Vermögen, mit Max Weber zu sprechen, anderen den eigenen Willen mit Gewalt aufzuzwingen, sondern dazu gehört eher noch mehr als weniger die internationale Akzeptanz eines Landes, das Vertrauen, das es genießt, die sachliche Kompetenz, die man ihm zutraut, der Nutzen, der sich aus der Zusammenarbeit ergeben könnte.

Da diese Gegebenheiten uns allen wohlbekannt sind, verzichte ich auf eine Erörterung der Frage, ob und wie man die Macht einer Großmacht messen könnte, oder gar, welche Länder Großmächte sind und welche nicht. Das hängt ohnehin weitgehend von der Definition des Großmachtbegriffs ab.

Statt dessen möchte ich einen anderen Weg zur Einleitung in unser Thema wählen.

Ich gehe von der Beobachtung aus, daß "Großmacht" seit dem 17. Jahrhundert, verstärkt seit dem Wiener Kongreß (1814/15) ein Statusbegriff ist, mit dem sich die Zugehörigkeit zu den Top Dogs des internationalen Systems verbindet. Eine Großmacht tritt dabei typischerweise nicht für sich allein auf. Großmächte bilden, mit Georg Schwarzenberger zu sprechen, eine "internationale Aristokratie", welche beansprucht, ihr jeweiliges Staatensystem erforderlichenfalls autoritativ ordnen zu dürfen. (Beispiele: der Wiener Kongreß (1814/15), der Berliner Kongreß (1878), die Pariser Friedensdiktate (1918/19).

Es versteht sich von selbst, daß in der Vergangenheit der Großmacht-Status immer irgendwie mit den Potentialen und mit der jeweiligen Machtposition verbunden gewesen ist. Dennoch ist Großmachtstatus eine Größe *sui generis*.

Status und Potential kommen oft nicht vollständig oder gar nicht mehr zur Deckung, wie beispielsweise gegenwärtig der Status Großbritanniens, Frankreichs, doch auch Rußlands, im Weltsicherheitsrat der Vereinten Nationen erkennen lassen.

Meine These nun: in der Staatengesellschaft der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts ist der traditionelle Großmachtstatus aus einer Reihe von Gründen erodiert. Ob es eines Tages wieder eine Gruppe allgemein akzeptierter Großmächte geben wird, ist unsicher. Gegenwärtig jedenfalls ist der Begriff "Großmacht" nicht mehr als Ordnungskategorie geeignet. Diese These ist zu entfalten, und dabei wird am gegebenen Ort auch anzuführen sein, weshalb Großmacht keine sehr brauchbare analytische Kategorie mehr darstellt.

Bekanntlich geht die Statusordnung auf die Barockzeit zurück, also das Jahrhundert der zum Absolutismus tendierenden Königreiche und des Feudalismus. Wie in der hierarchischen Gesellschaft jener Jahrhunderte gehen auch Völkerrecht und Theorie der internationalen Politik davon aus, daß es in der europäischen Staatengesellschaft ein Oben und ein Unten gibt, wobei den Angehörigen der internationalen Aristokratie legitime Ordnungsgewalt, zeremoniell hervorgehobener Rang und Exklusivität zukommen.

Die Exklusivität der internationalen Aristokratie ist durchaus mit prinzipieller Offenheit dieser Oberklasse der Staatengesellschaft vereinbar. So steigen im Verlauf des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts Spanien, Schweden und die Niederlande ab, während Preußen und Rußland hinzutreten. Nach den napoleonischen Kriegen wird diese aristokratische Spitzengruppe als Pentarchie bezeichnet und umfaßt jetzt Österreich, England, Frankreich, Rußland und Preußen.

Der Ordnungsanspruch dieser fünf Großmächte richtete sich grundsätzlich auf die Gesamtheit des Staatensystems. Talleyrand hat das in einer sehr klug formulierten Instruktion zum Wiener Kongreß wie folgt formuliert: "Les grandes puissances seules, embrassant l'ensemble, ordonneraient chacune des parties par rapport au tout". Demgegenüber sollte sich die Mitsprache der kleineren Staaten nur auf jene Bereiche beziehen, in denen sie unmittelbare Interessen hätten. So kam es denn zu jenen Begriffen "Hauptmächte", "puissances principales de l'Europe" oder "puissances du premier ordre", womit der Ordnungsanspruch, damit aber auch der Vorrang der Großmächte bis in die Jahrzehnte des Völkerbunds und der Vereinten Nationen semantisch gerechtfertigt wurde.

Man muß eben in bezug auf den Großmachtstatus von vornherein darauf hinweisen, daß sich dieser einerseits mit dem Anspruch verband, im Gesamtsystem ordnend einzugreifen, andererseits aber mit der Idee eines "Konzerts" der Großmächte, die insgesamt für das europäische Gleichgewicht - später: für das Weltgleichgewicht - verantwortlich seien.

In der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts hat sich dann aus der europäischen Aristokratie der "puissances du premier ordre" eine globale Aristokratie europäischer und außereuropäischer Großmächte entwickelt. Daß die USA und Japan diesem Areopag angehören würden, war schon vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg den Experten unbestritten. Aufstieg und Niedergang der Großmächte im einzelnen interessiert in diesem Zusammenhang weniger als die Tatsache, daß sich während des Zweiten Weltkrieges der globale Schwerpunkt, auch der Sitz der Aristokratie, in die USA verlagerte. Franklin D. Roosevelt's Konzept der Four Policemen - USA, Großbritannien, UdSSR und China -, das dann (mit freundlicher Hereinnahme Frankreichs) in die Konstruktion der Ständigen Mitglieder des Weltsicherheitsrates der UN einging, war eine der letzten, weit nachwirkenden Formulierungen einer globalen Aristokratie mit ausgeprägtem Ordnungsauftrag.

Dann aber kamen in der zweiten Jahrhunderthälfte bis in unsere Tage jene Tendenzen und Bedingungen zur Auswirkung, die sowohl die Statuskategorie "Großmacht" als auch den Gedanken eines Konzepts der Großmächte ad absurdum führten. Ich nenne stichwortartig nur die wichtigsten.

Erstens erfolgte zwischen 1945 und 1965 die Auflösung der Kolonialimperien Großbritanniens und Frankreichs mit der Folge, daß diese beiden Mächte allenfalls noch den Status einer

Großmacht in Europa in Anspruch nehmen konnten. De Gaulles hochmütige Versuche, dem entgegenzuwirken, wurden zur Geschichte eines eklatanten Scheiterns.

China hingegen, von Roosevelt als Großmacht favorisiert, fand sich nach dem Ende des chinesischen Bürgerkrieges bis Anfang der siebziger Jahre in einer isolierten Lage, die eine Mitwirkung nicht gestattete (der Status Nationalchinas auf Taiwan konnte nie ernstgenommen werden, obwohl es einen ständigen Sitz im Weltsicherheitsrat einnahm).

Die Rolle der bisherigen Großmächte wurde nun von den sogenannten Supermächten USA und UdSSR übernommen. Sie stützten ihren aristokratischen Anspruch auf ihre ideologische Führungsposition und auf ihre Vormachtstellung in den Allianzen. Sie besaßen die Macht und den Willen zu prinzipiell weltweiter militärischer Einwirkung, wenn nicht gar konkretem Eingreifen. Ihr Nuklearpotential war allen anderen überlegen und wurde nur durch gegenseitige Abschreckung neutralisiert. Mit dem Nuklearstatus verband sich der Status überlegener Weltmächte. Sie haben immer wieder versucht, global für Ordnung zu sorgen, vorrangig im eigenen Hegemonialbereich, bisweilen außerhalb desselben; meist im Konflikt, gelegentlich auch im Zusammenspiel.

Zweitens machten sich ungeachtet des Bipolarismus der Supermächte doch zunehmend egalitäre Tendenzen in der Staatengesellschaft bemerkbar. In einem Völkerrechtssystem, das auf den Prinzipien der souveränen Gleichheit der Völkerrechtssubjekte, der Souveränität in den inneren Angelegenheiten, des Verbots von Angriffskriegen, des Selbstbestimmungsrechts und anderen Grundsätzen mehr beruht, ist eine Statusüberlegenheit von Supermächten oder von Großmächten nicht mehr hinnehmbar. Es waren nicht zuletzt abgestiegene Großmächte - Großbritannien, Frankreich, Italien beispielsweise -, die sich gegen jeden Ordnungsanspruch der Supermächte wandten, damit aber ungewollt die egalitären Elemente im Staatensystem verstärkend.

Drittens führte die Herausbildung eines globalen Systems von derzeit rd. 190 Staaten zu einer Relativierung jedes Großmachtanspruchs. Denn im weltweiten Staatensystem spielen eben regionale Vormächte die Rolle von Großmächten, analog den seinerzeitigen Großmächten im ehemaligen europäischen Staatensystemen. Das gilt für Indien in Südostasien, für Indonesien im Pazifik, für Japan und China im gesamten Fernen Osten. Regionale Vormachtstellung mag sich auf wirtschaftliche Überlegenheit, auf Militärmacht, auf kulturelle Ausstrahlung, auf Schwäche der Nachbarn oder auf eine Kombination verschiedener Faktoren gründen. Sie befähigt jedenfalls nicht unbedingt (Japan ist die große Ausnahme) zur Weltmachtrolle, kann allerdings auch nicht gegenüber mittleren und kleineren Staaten im näheren und weiteren Umfeld ungebremst und unsensibel zur Geltung gebracht werden. Eine solche regionale Vormacht im europäischen Kontext ist auch Deutschland nach der Wiedervereinigung und - noch viel ausgeprägter - Rußland im Umfeld der GUS. In West- und Mitteleuropa können aber auch Großbritannien und Frankreich noch als regionale Vormächte begriffen werden - jedenfalls verstehen sie sich so.

Viertens wurde der Statusanspruch der Supermächte und der im Abstieg befindlichen Großmächte Frankreich und Großbritannien schon in den Jahrzehnten des Kalten Krieges durch den Umstand unterminiert, daß die europäischen Mächte, aber auch die USA, selbst in begrenzten Kriegen ihre früher so überwältigende waffentechnische Überlegenheit verloren hatten. Frankreich mußte dies während des Indochinakrieges und im Algerienkrieg erkennen. England war klug genug, sich zumeist rechtzeitig zurückzuziehen (das Suez-Debakel war eine Ausnahme von dieser Regel). Die USA mußten im Vietnamkrieg erfahren, daß sie sich gegen einen drittrangigen, zu jedem Opfer bereiten Gegner militärisch nicht durchsetzen konnten, und die UdSSR machte im Afghanistan-Krieg diese ernüchternde Erfahrung.

Die Tabuisierung des Kernwaffeneinsatzes läßt aber auch aus dem Kernwaffenbesitz keinen Großmachtstatus mehr ableiten. Kernwaffen sind international schon lange so verrufen wie das Giftgas seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. Solange im Kalten Krieg die Drohung kernwaffengerüsteter Supermächte bestand, mochte aus Kernwaffen im eigenen Lager noch ein begrenzter Führungsanspruch abgeleitet werden. Das ist vorbei. Heute müssen die Kernwaffenmächte die Aufmerksamkeit der Weltöffentlichkeit von ihrem Kernwaffenbesitz eher ablenken. Tun sie das nicht, so werden sie wie gegenwärtig Frankreich zum Objekt universellen Unmuts und weltweiter Verachtung.

Fünftens wird jeder Statusanspruch durch Weltmächte oder Großmächte weltweit oder in vielen Regionen durch die prinzipiell multilaterale Struktur der internationalen Zusammenarbeit konterkariert. Schon auf globaler Ebene im UN-System ist die Staatenwelt multilateral organisiert, ebenso in bezug auf die WTO oder andere globale Wirtschaftsinstitutionen. Im regionalen Rahmen - beispielsweise in der Europäischen Union oder in der NATO - ist die Multilateralisierung noch viel zwingender, kommt den Eigeninteresse der Beteiligten sehr entgegen und verstärkt die egalitären Tendenzen im Staatensystem. Dort, wo größere oder kleinere Staaten nicht in ein dichtes Netz regionaler Zweck-Arrangements eingebettet sind, besteht noch am ehesten die Neigung zu autonomem Großmachthandeln, damit verbunden auch ein recht anachronistisches Streben nach Anerkennung eines hervorgehobenen eigenen Status. Aber wer in multilateralen Organisationen mit ihren größeren, mittleren und kleineren Mitgliedstaaten auf seine Größe, sein Potential, seinen Gestaltungsanspruch pocht, hat schon verloren. Statusansprüche in multilateralen Institutionen wirken kontraproduktiv. Die Zwerge nehmen dann an Gulliver Rache.

Sechstens könnten sich die egalisierenden Tendenzen in der Staatengesellschaft nicht so stark auswirken, würden sie nicht durch ein Weltwirtschafts- und Welthandelssystem unterstützt, dessen Bedingungen sich kein einzelner Staat mehr entziehen kann. Wo Regierungen über die internationalen Finanzmärkte, die Investitionsentscheidungen oder die Preispolitik weltweit operierender Unternehmungen keinerlei Kontrolle mehr haben, wo selbst die Währung größerer Länder wie Großbritannien, Spanien, Frankreich oder Italien zur Disposition der Kapitalmärkte steht, wo große Volkswirtschaften wie die Mexikos, doch auch anderer Länder, von der Kulanz starker Gläubigerländer abhängig sind, gerät jeder Großmachtanspruch zur Farce. "Die Welt von Gestern" (Stefan Zweig) der Jahre vor 1914, vor 1945 oder auch noch vor dem Jahr 1971, als das System von Bretton Woods zusammenbrach, ist nicht mehr zurückzurufen.

Siebtens schließlich zeigt sich auch im 20. Jahrhundert wieder und wieder, daß sich Staaten, die in bestimmten Epochen ihr jeweiliges Staatensystem entscheidend verändern und zur Spitze vorstoßen, nicht immer durch Größe ausgezeichnet sind, wohl aber durch leistungsfähige Staats-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialorganisation, durch zähen Willen oder durch Sendungsbewußtsein, durch Unbedenklichkeit vielleicht auch oder durch kulturelle Ausstrahlung.

Mächte dieser Art waren vom 13. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert Venedig, vom 15. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert das Osmanische Reich, im 17. Jahrhundert die Generalstaaten, im 18. Jahrhundert Preußen, im späten 19. und 20. Jahrhundert Japan. Demgegenüber war beispielsweise China, ungeachtet seiner kulturellen Tradition, seiner Menschenmassen und der Intelligenz der chinesischen Rasse in der ganzen ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts, aber trotz aller Showtalente Maos auch nicht bis in die späten siebziger Jahre, keine Großmacht von globaler Bedeutung. Auch Indien, in dem mancher Beobachter seit der Unabhängigkeit eine kommende Weltmacht sehen wollte, ist nicht über den Rang einer Regionalmacht hinausgelangt. Weltwirtschaftlich hat das viel kleinere Japan, ja selbst Südkorea, größeres Gewicht als Indien oder als ein gleichfalls großes Land wie Brasilien.

Bei den genannten Ländern kam und kommt aber Wirtschaftsmacht, Militärmacht oder Gewicht in der jeweiligen Region vielfach nicht zur Deckung. Auch dies ist ein Grund, von künstlichen Statuszuweisungen abzusehen.

Wenn es aber zutrifft, daß die Staatenwelt nicht mehr hierarchisch geordnet ist und auch keine protokollarisch provozierenden internationalen Aristokratien mehr erträgt, bleibt die Frage, ob die relativ großen, leistungsfähigen Mächte nicht doch die Aufgabe wahrnehmen sollten, Ordnung zu schaffen und den internationalen Desperados zu wehren.

Indem ich eben auf den Anachronismus der Kategorie "Großmacht" hingewiesen habe, wollte ich dies nicht verneinen. Aber erforderlichenfalls Ordnung schaffen, Aggressoren entgegenreten und Genozid verhindern kann nicht mehr allein von großen Ländern geleistet werden, so unerlässlich deren Potential auch ist. Multilaterale Allianzen oder auch ad-hoc-Koalitionen von Art der Golf-Kriegs-Koalition sind dafür besser geeignet. Anders wäre die große Zahl kleinerer und mittlerer Staaten nicht bereit, die Legitimität notwendiger Zwangsmaßnahmen oder von Neuordnungen zu akzeptieren. Der ganze Globus befindet sich eben in einer Epoche "nach der Hegemonie" (Robert Keohane) und in einer Staatenwelt von spürbar egalitärer Ausrichtung. Selbst wenn die großen Mächte die Hauptlast tragen und die Lösungen festlegen, tun sie gut daran, um ein "low profile" bemüht zu sein und kontraproduktive Großmachtallüren zu vermeiden.

Selbst die USA, derzeit die einzig verbliebene Weltmacht, haben erkannt, daß die bisherige Supermachtrolle doch ausgespielt ist. Sie werden zwar noch gebraucht, doch derzeit nicht mehr sehr dringend. Somit ist eine Pax Americana mit demonstrativ hervorgekehrtem Weltmachtstatus, von der man in den Jahren von George Bush noch geträumt hat, weder objektiv möglich noch wäre sie in einer egalitären Staatengesellschaft akzeptabel. Solange sich die Staatenwelt keinen dramatischen Gefährdungen mehr gegenüber sieht, wird man sowohl im Fernen Osten als auch in Europa die USA nur noch als regional gewichtige Großmacht unter anderen Mächten akzeptieren, ganz sicher aber nicht als Weltpolizist, wozu die Eliten und die Öffentlichkeit Amerikas ohnehin nicht bereit wären.

So gilt eben sogar für Amerika, daß die Epochen des Großmachtstatus seit Ende des Golfkriegs erst einmal vorbei sind. Eine Weltmacht bleiben die USA aber eben nur noch im Sinn pragmatischer Einwirkung auf die Staatenwelt, ohne Sendungsbewußtsein, ohne Anspruch auf hervorgehobenen Rang und ohne großes Getöse. Die Bedingungen einer Welt ohne Großmachtstatus haben auch Amerika eingeholt.

Russia and the West in the 1970s and 1980s: Star Wars and the Soviet Supernova

by Hannes Adomeit

Introduction

Observing that human institutions often show the greatest outward brilliance at a moment when inner decay is in reality farthest advanced, [Thomas Mann] compared the Buddenbrook family, in the days of its greatest glamour, to one of those stars whose light shines most brightly on this world when in reality it has long since ceased to exist. And who can say with assurance that the strong light still cast by the Kremlin on the dissatisfied peoples of the western world is not the powerful afterglow of a constellation which is in actuality on the wane? (George F. Kennan, June 1947)

Like empires, all stars die. Kennan was conscious of this very fact. Celestial bodies expire after they have exhausted their nuclear fuel. Stars with little mass die gradually but those with relatively large mass terminate their existence in a spectacular explosion. It is the extremely bright flash of light that is called supernova. On July 4, 1054 A.D., a supernova exploded that lit up the sky most impressively. It stayed that way, with light enough to read at night, for over three months. If, as in 1054, the amount of original matter in the star is large enough, the collapse that occurs after the explosion will form a black hole.¹

All metaphors have deficiencies. The Soviet supernova was not an explosion but an implosion, and what we are left with is not dead matter and a black hole but a new nation: the new Russia. This is an entity that is very much alive and caught up in difficult transformation processes and a painful search for a new identity. One of the major currents in that search flowing broadly across the present political spectrum is the idea that Russia is or should again be a 'great power', a superstar to be repositioned on the world scene. Such advocates (*derzhavniki*) can be found not only in the Derzhava (Great Power) electoral bloc of former Vice President and October 1993 rebel leader Aleksandr Rutskoi but also among the leaders and rank and file nationalist, communist, semi-fascist and fascist political parties and movements. They typically aim at the reformation of a strong centralized state, reestablishment of control in the 'near abroad', improved prestige and influence in world affairs and often reconstitution of the Soviet Union. In the most extreme version of this tendency, Gorbachev and a close circle of advisers are seen as 'criminals' who began the destruction of the Soviet Union, with Yeltsin completing it, all of these leaders aided in their treacherous schemes by foreign intelligence services.²

Such ideas typically ignore the lessons to be derived from the decline of the Soviet Union as a superpower and the ultimate collapse of the Soviet empire. They are part of an analytical framework, cognitive map, conceptual design or paradigm that fatefully governed Soviet foreign policy from the end of the Second World War until the mid-1980s. The constituent elements of the paradigm were competitive and confrontational, with ideological, geopolitical and military-strategic factors playing the dominating role in policy formulation and providing the rationales and rationalizations for global expansion and tight control in the Soviet bloc or what was then known as 'Eastern Europe'.

¹ Richard Brennan, *Dictionary of Scientific Literacy* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1992), pp. 290-91.

² For a more detailed analysis of the emergence and role of 'great power' thinking and policies see Hannes Adomeit, 'Russia as a "Great Power" in World Affairs: Images and Reality', *International Affairs* (London), Vol. 71, No. 1 (January 1995), pp. 35-68.

This paradigm, as the *derzhavniki* conveniently tend to forget, experienced a serious crisis in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In this phase, that is, the last years of the Brezhnev era and the Andropov and Chernenko 'interregnum', significant failures and setbacks converged in all dimensions of state activity: ideology, politics, economics, military affairs, social policy, ethnic relations, ecology and demography. Blaming Gorbachev and Yeltsin for the predicaments of Russian domestic politics and foreign policy, the advocates of Soviet restoration and 'great power' policies also tend to overlook the fact that the current malaise began in the Soviet era and that many of the remedies which they are now suggesting were tried by Andropov and initially also by Gorbachev but failed to work. To reexamine this important period of world history is, therefore, not only an analytical challenge but also politically important.

For the purposes of this inquiry about the East-West competition as a factor of Soviet decline from the late 1970s until the mid-1980s, the Soviet Union will be considered an imperial entity consisting of three concentric rings. The first and innermost ring was that of the USSR with its fifteen constituent republics. The second consisted of 'Eastern Europe', that is, the non-Soviet countries of the Warsaw Pact. The third and outermost ring comprised Moscow's dependencies, its friends and allies outside the Central Eurasian landmass, including at one time or another Cuba, North Vietnam, Laos, North Korea, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Egypt, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Angola and Mozambique.

The sequence of presentation adopted here is to focus first on the erosion of three major instruments in the Soviet Union's competition with the West: Marxist-Leninist ideology, military power and economic potential. This part includes analysis of the various paradoxes of superpower: the inability to reconcile ends and means; the failure to close the gap between ambition and reality; the dichotomy between external expansion and internal decline; and the contradictions between military priorities and an eroding economic base. The second part starts from the premise that the perceived necessity of competition exacerbated these contradictions and hence addresses the problem as to what it was that ultimately brought down the Soviet empire and the Soviet system: the acceleration of the military-technological competition embarked upon by the Reagan administration; the deepening of "internal contradictions" in the center and the periphery of empire as a result of the Europeans' constructive engagement, including West Germany's *Ostpolitik*; or a combination of both.

Crisis in the Ideological Competition with the West

Ideology in any system, including the Soviet-type system, can be said to play a number of important functions: analytical or cognitive; utopian or missionary; mobilizing; and legitimizing. Marxist-Leninist ideology failed in all of these dimensions. As Yakovlev told a conference of communist party secretaries, what went wrong with ideology was that there had been grave deformations in a number of directions, including

1. Overemphasis on what it is that separates socialism from capitalism', namely a narrow focus on the differences as they existed 'at the time and in the specific conditions when socialism arose'.
2. Uncritical adherence to decisions, formulations, approaches and definitions that had been developed in the past and which subsequently came to be idolized, codified and cast in basalt and [leading to a state of affairs where] every attempt to revise them was declared to be a deviation from socialism, subversion and treachery'.

3. Arbitrary "exclusion" from or "admission" to socialism of whole countries and peoples, dictated by practical political interests or dogma. As a result, the Marxist truth was lost that every social order is shaped by the conditions and requirements of life and not by dogmatic belief, no matter how attractive it may seem to be.³

What was wrong with ideology was also the fact that each and every one of the major cognitive and predictive elements of Marxist-Leninist ideology turned out to be erroneous. Of course, some of the dogmas had been revised under Khrushchev, notably the idea that military conflict among the imperialist states, as well as war between imperialism and socialism, were 'inevitable'. But the other main formalized perceptions and predictions had remained in force. This concerned the notions that the 'contradictions' between the 'power centers of imperialism' were more basic than the links that unite them; that, in the long term, the 'correlation of forces' would shift in favor of socialism; that conflict would end with the victory of socialism; that the socialist mode of production were superior to that of capitalism; that the 'national-liberation movements' would bring about states with anti-imperialist, non-capitalist and ultimately socialist orientation; that class relations are the determining factor of international affairs; and that nationalism would wither away.

The increasing gap between ideology and reality and the decline of the effectiveness of the Soviet system did not lead to a withering away of the state or of nationalism but of the attractiveness of the Soviet model of development. This negative phenomenon applied across the board in world politics. But it was true first and foremost in the highly developed Western industrialized countries - in the United States, Western Europe and Japan. In the late 1970s, a virtual revolt took place against the Soviet-type model in the *industrialized countries*, notably in Western Europe, in the form of 'Eurocommunism', which also existed under this label in Japan. This phenomenon was stringently opposed by Soviet ideologists. For reasons unconnected with the Soviet opposition, 'Eurocommunism' disappeared as an overt challenge to the Soviet model in the 1980s. But the serious alienation between the more progressive Western communist parties and the CPSU remained. Furthermore, the electoral strength of traditionally strong communist parties, such as the communist parties of Italy and France, significantly declined.

The Soviet failures in the ideological competition in Western countries were replicated in the countries of the *Third World*. In the 1950s and 1960s, it had seemed to Soviet ideologists and political leaders that the rapidly accelerating processes of decolonization would set the newly independent, excolonial countries on a 'non-capitalist path of development' in internal system structure and on an anti-imperialist, anti-Western course in foreign policy. It had for this reason appeared expedient from Moscow's vantage point to provide aid to what it called the 'national-liberation struggle'. But whereas it turned out that Soviet support could often decide the question of power in the short term, the Soviet Union was incapable of contributing meaningfully to long-term socio-economic development. More often than not, after a period of cooperation with the Warsaw Pact in security matters, these countries turned to the West for development aid. Furthermore, the combination of overestimation of the importance of the Third World in the 'historic competition between socialism and imperialism' led to overextension, overcommitment and rising costs of empire.

Thus, as former officials of the CPSU's international department have frankly admitted in retrospect, the model of socialist development as exemplified by the Soviet Union before the advent of

³ Speech by Aleksandr Yakovlev at the conference of communist party secretaries for ideological questions, held in Varna (Bulgaria), 26-28 September 1989, included for agenda item 8 of SED Politburo meeting of 17 October 1989; SED, Central Archives, Politburo *Arbeitsprotokolle*, J IV 2/2A/3247.

perestroika had essentially 'exhausted' itself⁴ and the international communist movement turned from an asset into a liability.⁵ Significant sums of money were wasted for an endless procession of visiting communist dignitaries, their medical treatment in Moscow, vacations in Sochi and hunting trips in Siberia although, in their country of origin, the expensive guests had often no more than a nuisance value. In fact, the smaller the party the greater often the profession of loyalty to Moscow. In October 1984, Gorbachev - the then second-in-command of the party - pertinently was to observe in conversation with the deputy head of the CC's international department, Vadim Zagladin: 'We have to ask ourselves why it is that influential, strong parties separate themselves from us, whereas the small and insignificant parties remain orthodox and faithful to Moscow'.⁶

The erosion of the effectiveness of the international communist movement was apparent also in *Central and Eastern Europe*. In the late 1960s, ideological revisionism had appeared in the form of 'market socialism', 'socialism with a human face' and the 'Third Way', and had temporarily been crushed as a result of the Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia in August 1968. But it reasserted itself in an even more dramatic and, from the Soviet perspective, more dangerous form in Poland in 1980-81. The political and military problems which the rise of Solidarity and the demise of the Polish communist party posed for the Soviet Union and its proclivity to 'solve' questions by the use of force will be examined in the next section. In the present ideological context, it is appropriate to point to the theoretical implications the problem. According to Marxist-Leninist theory, irreconcilable contradictions could exist and crises occur only in capitalist systems. Andropov had still adhered to this dogma but at least admitted that, 'Yes, we do experience contradictions as well as difficulties'; to think that this could be different would be 'abandoning safe, even though harsh realities'. History had taught that 'contradictions which, by their nature, are non-antagonist, can produce serious collisions if they are not taken into consideration'.⁷ But several theorists went beyond the euphemisms of their chief and called attention to the absurdity of the distinction between, in principle, 'irreconcilable' contradictions, and such contradictions as can in theory be 'solved' but not in practice. To them, as Poland had clearly shown, it was nonsense to blame acute problems on the *perezhitki proshlogo*, the 'remnants of the past'. The fault, in their view, lay with the policies of the communist party which could produce 'political crises with all its dangers for socialism'.⁸ What at that time could not be said openly, but was widely discussed, was the fact that there were grave structural deficiencies of socialism itself which needed to be addressed in a fundamental way.

Military Power and Political Influence

⁴ Yakovlev speech at the September 1989 conference of communist party secretaries for ideological questions; *ibid.*

⁵ Author interviews with Vadim Zagladin, Viktor Rykin and Sergei Grigoriev.

⁶ As reported by Anatolii Chernyaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym*, p. 19. Chernyaev, like Zagladin, at that time was one of the deputies of the CC's international department.

⁷ Yurii N. Andropov, 'Uchenie Karla Marksa i nekotorye voprosy sotsialisticheskogo stroitel'stva v SSSR', *Kommunist*, No. 3 (February 1983), p. 21.

⁸ A.P. Butenko, 'Protivorechiia razvitiia sotsializma kak obshchestvennogo stroia', *Voprosy filosofii*, No. 10 (1982), p. 27. The author at that time was a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences and Deputy Director of the Institute for the Economy of the World Socialist System. A similar approach was taken several other authors, including, the Vice President of the USSR Academy of Sciences, P.N. Fedoseev, 'Dialektik des gesellschaftlichen Lebens', *Probleme des Friedens und des Sozialismus*, No. 9 (September 1981), pp. 1192-1200.

The second main pillar on which the Soviet empire had rested was military power. In retrospect, it seems that a fairly simple but stubbornly executed idea was underlying Soviet foreign policy from Stalin to Chernenko. The build-up of strategic nuclear power, a preponderance in conventional weaponry and forces in Europe, superiority in short and medium-range nuclear systems and naval and airborne forces capable of intervention and power projection far beyond the periphery of the Soviet Union would translate into increasing political influence. In the 1970s, the approach had seemed to be working. But in the early 1980s, painful setbacks *tous azimuts* combined to challenge the effectiveness of this approach. The failures occurred more or less simultaneously in Soviet policies towards the United States, Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, Japan, China and the Third World.

The United States. In the early 1980s, it had become apparent to Soviet ideologists and political leaders that the strength of 'antagonist contradictions' in the West had been overestimated and that the 'objective forces' that bind together the three main 'power centers of imperialism' had been stronger than those which had put them at odds with each other. In practical political terms, it had proved impossible to separate the United States from Western Europe and Japan. There had, of course, been many issues that had been divisive in Western alliance relations: sanctions in response to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan; sanctions as a punishment for the 'internal intervention' in Poland; the West German gas, credit and pipeline deal; the stationing of medium-range missiles in Europe; and doubts about the reliability and loyalty of various European allies. However, by late 1983 and 1984 these controversies had receded in importance or disappeared altogether.

In the United States itself, the strength, composition and orientation of socio-economic and political forces had also changed - a fact that the Soviet experts on American affairs (*Amerikanisty*) were quick to recognize. The main line among the experts at the beginning of the first Reagan administration had been the notion that the 'conservative wave' in the United States was essentially short-lived and would soon subside. However, as the Republicans headed for a resounding electoral victory in 1984, the *Amerikanisty* and other international relations experts increasingly came to adhere to the view that the conservatism in the United States was a more lasting phenomenon.

As for American defense policies, in the 1970s it may have appeared to Soviet political leaders and analysts that NATO was no longer able successfully to compete with the Warsaw Pact in the arms competition; that the Western countries were primarily reacting to Soviet initiatives; and that these countries were increasingly putting faith in arms control negotiations to redress a, from their perspective, deteriorating military balance. But starting from the late 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, these trends were reversed. Defense outlays in the United States began to rise sharply. New challenges were issued to the Warsaw Pact, one in the form of more sophisticated, computerized conventional weapons and command and control systems, the other in the shape of Reagan's strategic defense initiative. Thus, in conjunction with the deployment of intermediate-range nuclear weapons and the resulting capability of NATO to strike at Soviet territory from Western Europe, as well as the on-going US strategic modernization programs, it was now the Soviet Union which was put into a position to respond - and to do so in the area of high technology in which it could compete less easily and effectively.

Shevardnadze later was to report on a conversation in his private home in Moscow with United States Ambassador Thomas J. Watson about the impact of the arms race on the two superpowers. The American ambassador had told the Soviet foreign minister that in the United States signs of a falling standard of living had begun to appear but that only very few people in the United States attributed this to the high costs of the arms race. 'And it's the same for you. By taking the chief

brunt of the arms race on ourselves, the United States and the USSR are beginning to lose the competition in other areas'. Nodding in agreement with Ambassador Watson, Shevardnadze cited the example of the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan: 'While we were competing in the production and stockpiling of the state-of-the-art weapons, they, freed from this burden, surged ahead of us'. He could have added, as he wrote, that in 'our economy only the military-industrial complex operated at peak performance, thriving at the country's expense, and made it possible for the country to entertain illusions of its own might and power. But suddenly it dawned on us that real power is something much more than nuclear warheads'.⁹ As this conversation and other evidence shows, the realization of the increasing difficulty and rising costs of keeping up with the United States in the arms race interacted with the doubts about the utility of military power in international affairs.

The in-flight destruction of the unarmed civilian South Korean airliner, Flight 007, from New York *en route* to Seoul, over the waters of the Sea of Okhotsk exacerbated both Soviet-American relations and the almost international isolation into which the Soviet Union had maneuvered itself. It also underlined the pitfalls of an imperial or superpower mind-set, relying on the military and its standard operating procedures. According to Dobrynin, the KAL 007 crisis 'illuminated the difficult relations and lack of communication between our civilian leaders and the military establishment, the generals being even more isolated from the rest of the world than the politicians'. As mutual Soviet-American invectives were exchanged, party chief Andropov, who 'looked haggard and worried', told Dobrynin on October 6 to 'Return immediately to Washington and try to do your utmost to dampen this needless conflict bit by bit. Our military made a gross blunder by shooting down the airliner and it probably will take a long time to get out of this mess'. Yet at the same time the Soviet leadership 'did not have enough courage to recognize publicly and immediately with deep regret that it [the plane] had been shot down over Soviet territory by a tragic mistake ... It was unusual at that time for the Soviet government to accept [that] it had made any kind of error'.¹⁰

Western Europe. Another crucially important failure in the attempt at transforming military power into political influence was the Soviet campaign against the stationing of intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe, the Pershing 2 and cruise missiles. Chancellor Schmidt had attempted several times to impress upon the Soviet leadership that legitimate Western European security interests would be violated and West Germany, above all the SPD, would be pushed into a very difficult political situation if the Soviet Union were to deploy a large force of intermediate range nuclear weapons, the SS-20 missile and the Backfire bomber. However, until the break-up of negotiations in 1983, no Western offer at compromise (the negotiation part of NATO's 'dual track' decision) was to slow down the momentum of Soviet deployments; the Soviet Union built up enormous superiority in INF systems. It attempted at the same time to delay or prevent altogether the NATO counter-deployments in Western Europe, its major instrument being a Western 'peace movement' that reached impressive strength in 1983. But whereas the USSR, even after the Western counter-deployments, came out of the INF controversy in the mid-1980s with military advantages, politically the end result was abysmal failure. The SPD-FDP government under Schmidt stumbled and tumbled over the issue and was finally, as a result of the March 1983 parliamentary elections, replaced by a CDU/CSU-FDP coalition government under Kohl. In Western Europe, the Soviet leadership now saw itself faced with governments of varying composition, conservative in West Germany and Britain, and socialist in France and

⁹ Shevardnadze, *Moi vybor*, pp. 149-50.

¹⁰ Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents* (New York: Random House, 1995), pp. 536-37. The date of this exchange is not altogether clear from the text. October 6 appears to be the date Dobrynin refers to.

Italy, yet all of these governments strongly supporting the stationing of US missiles in Europe, improvement of conventional defense in Europe and the strengthening of Atlantic ties. Conversely, the opposition parties in these countries, at least for the time being, seemed far removed from winning power and influencing policies. Finally, the effectiveness of the 'peace movement' as an instrument of Soviet state policy in Western Europe severely declined in importance.

Chancellor Kohl in retrospect reflected on the INF controversy and stated that the Soviet leadership had come 'to recognize the futility of its attempts at decoupling European and American security' and 'to divide the alliance'. He was convinced that this experience had been 'an essential precondition for the policy of the New Thinking in the Soviet Union. President Gorbachev himself confirmed this in conversation with me.'¹¹

The '*Peace Movement*'. In 1984, ID officials and propagandists were still trying to reassure themselves and the top Soviet leadership that the Western 'peace movement' was far from defeated. They cheerfully claimed that a June 1984 opinion survey in West Germany, 'with 150 000 activists polling 5 million citizens', had revealed that 87 percent of the respondents were still 'opposed to the stationing of new intermediate-range nuclear missiles' and 'supported the withdrawal of the [missiles] already deployed'.¹² The Soviet propagandists were still consoling themselves with the idea that, in the past, there had been recurrent 'waves' and 'periodic ebbs and flows' of Western anti-war movements. However, each and every wave had tended to be larger and more broadly based. The 'peace movement' had lost the INF-campaign but was now entering 'a new stage of development' and gradually transforming itself into a 'permanent political factor' that would be able to exert 'effective influence' on government decisions.¹³

The doubts as to the validity of such interpretations were made official only at the Twenty-seventh party congress with Gorbachev's message that the CPSU would 'proceed from the realities of the modern world', such realities including the fact that 'It is, of course, not possible to solve the problem of international security with one or two even very intense peace offensives. Only consistent, systematic, and persistent work can bring success'.¹⁴ Subsequently, even *Pravda* commentators were prepared to acknowledge what perceptive analysts had known for some time and discussed in private: 'In the last few years a tendency could be noted among the anti-war movements, including among the most active and relatively important ones, to put themselves at a distance to the peace organizations of the socialist countries'. This tendency threatened to 'divide the progressive forces and thus to decrease their strength'.¹⁵

Afghanistan and the Third World. Soviet failures in the competition over the internal systemic structure and foreign policy orientation of the countries of the Third World were equally apparent. In the 1970s, the dispatch of military advisers and arms, as well as the cooperation with 'proxies', such as Cuba and Vietnam, had seemed to have brought about substantial gain at little risk of confrontation with the United States. However, the subsequent years began to look different. The adversary superpower had overcome the dual shock of Vietnam and Watergate and was ready again more vigorously to oppose the USSR worldwide. The potential success of such

¹¹ Speech by Chancellor Helmut Kohl on 12 November 1991 in Strasbourg, accepting the European Prize for Statecraft, Press and Information Office of the Federal Government, *Bulletin*, No. 137, pp. 1115-16.

¹² G. Kirillov and V. Shenaev, 'FRG: Oslablenie pozitsii praviashchei koalitsii', in Oleg N. Bykov, ed., *Mezhdunarodnyi ezhegodnik: Vypusk 1985 goda. Politika i ekonomika* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1985), pp. 193-94. The book appeared in 1985 but the article was written in 1984.

¹³ V. Orel, 'Antivoennoe dvizhenie: dostizheniia i perspektivy', *Kommunist*, No. 12 (1984), pp. 87-98 (italics mine).

¹⁴ *Pravda*, 26 February 1986.

¹⁵ Yurii Zhukov, 'The Anti-War Movements', *International Affairs* (Moscow), No. 4 (April 1987), p. 23.

responses was facilitated by the fact that the success of Soviet and Cuban intervention in Angola and Ethiopia had turned out to have been less than straightforward; continued Soviet support and Cuban military involvement were required to prevent deteriorating internal conditions from leading to a collapse of the Soviet position in these countries. Vietnam's victory in the south of the country and its occupation of Cambodia, too, had brought about costs, not just economic but also political costs, 'complicating' Sino-Soviet relations and the relationship between the USSR and the prospering non-communist countries of South East Asia. Finally and most importantly, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan had not produced a quick solution and stabilization, as it had after previous interventions in Eastern Europe, but led to a widening guerilla war supported by outside powers. It remained, as Gorbachev deplored at the Twenty-seventh party congress, an 'open wound'.¹⁶

Central and Eastern Europe. The events in Afghanistan interacted with the events in the Soviet bloc. As aptly described in retrospect by Shevardnadze, before 1979 the use of force by the Soviet Union in neighboring countries had helped normalize the situation at a relatively low political, military and economic cost. But the quick 'solution' had not worked in Afghanistan. The invasion of the country had provoked a strongly negative reaction that had grown daily in Soviet society and abroad. A whole range of factors operated in the circumstances to create serious dilemmas for the Moscow: 'Afghanistan, the Soviet domestic situation, the possible negative reaction from the West. But that was not all. I think Moscow was given pause by serious and, I suppose, correct fears that the Poles would fight back, that full-scale military actions would have to be unleashed'.¹⁷ Indeed, new archival sources have revealed that Brezhnev and other members of the Politburo were well aware how difficult and costly an invasion would be. When the issue was discussed at a Politburo meeting in late October 1981, even hard-liners, such as Defense Minister Ustinov and KGB chairman Andropov, had to concede that 'it would be impossible now for us to send troops to Poland'. They and their colleagues agreed that the Soviet Union 'must steadfastly adhere to [its] line not to send in troops'.¹⁸ Ideological *Gralshüter* Suslov also agreed with this point of view.¹⁹ Yet at the same time the collective mind of the Politburo was made up too to the effect, as Foreign Minister Gromyko put it, 'we simply cannot and must not lose Poland'.²⁰ Almost miraculously the Soviet leadership was able to avoid military intervention as martial law 'dressed in Polish uniform' was imposed. But the basic structural problems of imperial control in Eastern Europe remained; the internal ferment did not end; no stable solution was achieved.²¹ As Poland had shown conclusively, the attempt at transforming military preponderance into legitimate and effective political control had failed.

¹⁶ *Pravda*, 26 February 1986.

¹⁷ Shevardnadze, *Moi vybor*, pp. 205-6. The author also mentioned that, at one point in the crisis, 'I happened to be in Mikhail A. Suslov's office. Someone phoned him to report about the worsening situation in Poland and to insist, as I understood it, on an "activation of forces". Suslov repeated firmly several times, "There is no way that we are going to use force in Poland."' (*ibid.*)

¹⁸ The new documentary evidence was found by Mark Kramer of Brown University. For a presentation and analysis of the archival sources see his 'Poland, 1980-81: Soviet Policy During the Polish Crisis', Cold War International History Project (Woodrow Wilson International Center, Washington, D.C.), *Bulletin*, Issue No. 5 (Spring 1995), pp. 1, 116-26; this quotation p. 121.

¹⁹ According to Shevardnadze, at one point in the crisis, 'I happened to be in Mikhail A. Suslov's office. Someone phoned him to report about the worsening situation in Poland and to insist, as I understood it, on an "activation of forces". Suslov repeated firmly several times, "There is no way that we are going to use force in Poland."' (*Moi vybor*, pp. 205-6).

²⁰ At a Politburo meeting in October 1980, Kramer, 'Poland, 1980-81', p. 118.

²¹ Shevardnadze, *Moi vybor*, pp. 205-6.

East Germany and the German Problem. The accelerating decay at the center and the latent and overt conflicts in the Soviet bloc also affected Soviet relations with the most exposed part of the European periphery: East Germany. At the root of the problem were ambiguous and even contradictory Soviet perceptions. The Soviet leaders from Brezhnev to Gorbachev, on the one hand, thought that East Gorbachev had made great strides towards internal political consolidation and international recognition and was, relatively speaking, an economic success story. But, on the other, they were increasingly concerned about East Germany's allegedly rising dependency on West Germany and its drift away from the Warsaw Pact and Comecon.

Honecker, the new East German leader, had in the first half of the 1970s been willing to consent to a package of quadripartite agreements and understandings on Berlin and bilateral agreements with West Germany on intra-German relations. However, as aptly described by Yulii Kvitsinsky, beginning in the second half of the 1970s, Honecker became more self-confident and independent and just as difficult to manage as his predecessor Ulbricht. There was now even less coordination and consultation between the GDR and the USSR than in the past. The Soviet leadership reacted with admonitions to the SED 'comrades' not to overestimate their role and, in their relations with West Germany, not to let themselves be drawn into economic dependencies. Gromyko in particular took this line. However, all the admonitions fell on deaf ears. And there was very little the USSR could do since it had transferred most of its occupation rights to the GDR.²²

One of the three major issues that were to provide triggering mechanisms for a severe crisis in Soviet-East German relations in 1984 was that of GDR debt and perceived dependency on West Germany. This problem will be analyzed in the section dealing with the erosion of the economic instrument in the Soviet competition with the West. The second triggering device were the preparations for an official state visit by Honecker to the Federal Republic of Germany. For the East German party leader, such a visit was, in the opinion of former SED Politburo colleagues, an 'important, even emotional issue'²³ and the 'crowning of his career'.²⁴ In the summer of that year, the visit turned from a dim prospect to a definite possibility to be realized in September. The Soviet leadership, as will be shown, was adamant that the visit should be canceled.

The third trigger was the divergence of Soviet and East German reactions to the autumn 1983 Bundestag decision on the stationing of intermediate-range nuclear missiles. Honecker, in order to emphasize the East German position, stated at a plenary meeting of the SED Central Committee in November 1983, held only two days after the beginning of missile deployments in West Germany, that the 'countermeasures' decided upon by the Warsaw Pact did 'not elicit any enthusiasm' in the GDR. He clarified that it was of 'great importance to continue the political dialogue with all forces'. Although he charged that the Kohl government had taken upon itself a great responsibility by agreeing to the stationing of the missiles, he nevertheless assured the Central Committee that 'We are in favor of limiting the damage as much as possible'.²⁵

All of these issues were at odds with Soviet positions and prompted the Soviet leadership viciously to attack East German policies, indirectly in two *Pravda* articles²⁶ and most directly and

²² Yulii A. Kvitsinsky as quoted in 'Mauerbau mit Genehmigung Moskaus: Kwizinski als Zeuge im Keßler Prozeß', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 23 July 1993; see also Julij A. Kwizinskij, *Vor dem Sturm: Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten* (Berlin: Siedler, 1993), pp. 255-66; similarly to this author in an interview in Berlin on 5 June 1994.

²³ Author's interviews with Honecker's successor, Egon Krenz.

²⁴ Schabowski, Günter, *Das Politbüro: Ende eines Mythos. Eine Befragung*, ed. by Frank Sieren and Ludwig Koehne, Series rororo aktuell (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1991), p. 35.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 26-27 November 1983.

²⁶ Lev Bezymenskii, 'Pod sen'iu amerikanskikh raket', *Pravda*, 27 July 1984, and 'Na lozhnom puti', *ibid.*, 2 August 1984.

uncompromisingly in a secret emergency meeting, held in Moscow on 17 August 1984, between the most senior representatives of the Soviet and East German party and state apparatus.²⁷ At that meeting, Chernenko attacked Honecker for having made 'dubious unilateral concessions to Bonn' and created 'additional financial dependencies of the GDR on the FRG'. He called the slogan of the 'coalition of reason' in response to the stationing of the Pershing II and cruise missiles 'phraseology without class content' and bluntly told Honecker that the whole matter really came down to this: It was necessary 'not to convey the impression that the hard line of the Reagan administration is producing results'. Conciliatory responses would lead to 'even stronger and more brazen pressure'.²⁸ As for his planned visit to West Germany, Chernenko warned Honecker that 'We also would like to tell you that we, Soviet communists, would react positively if, in the circumstances that have arisen, you were to cancel the visit'.²⁹ Clearly, despite the tremendous array of weapons and armed forces in the GDR, the Soviet leadership (including Gorbachev, who was present at the meeting and tooted in the same anti-Honecker horn) was under the firm impression that it was beginning to lose control.

To summarize this section on the political utility of military power, by 1983-84 the Soviet leaders found themselves caught up in their competition with the West in a position of severe international isolation and they had no better idea than to adopt an attitude of 'insulted giant' and 'bear in hibernation'.³⁰ Based on the assumption that, in response to the implementation of NATO's dual-track decision, they now had to live up to their threats of political and military 'countermeasures', they showed a 'stone-hard' face to the outside world. In typically Brezhnevite fashion, Andropov continued with the further deployment of SS-20 missiles, the stationing of 'operational-tactical missiles' in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, and the forward positioning of nuclear-armed submarines 'in ocean areas' close to the US coast. He broke off the arms control negotiations on strategic and medium range nuclear weapons, and for a time also those on conventional arms. Chernenko, his successor, abandoned the policy of 'selective *détente*' toward the Western European countries and his propagandists included in their verbal onslaught not only American 'adventurism' and 'militarism' but also Japan. They were also attacking the West German government for allegedly aiding and abetting 'revanchist' and 'neo-Nazi' tendencies. Tendencies for a cooperation between China and the West were growing. In the Islamic world, the standing of the Soviet Union continued to be negatively affected by the occupation of Afghanistan and the support for a pro-Soviet and pro-communist system in that country.

All lines of communication were blocked. The Soviet leaders for all practical purposes ceased to be active participants in international politics and were voluntarily relegating themselves to a role of bystander. However, behind the facade of defiance and stridency the realization was beginning to gain ground in Moscow that power in international relations does not depend on raw quantitative indicators, such as the size of the population and on the number of square miles 'controlled' on the Hindukush or the Horn of Africa, but in the ability to develop the human potential or the *chelovecheskii* faktor, as this was called under Andropov. A greater awareness also began to evolve as to the importance of political, cultural, economic and technological instruments in the competition for influence in world affairs.

²⁷ The source for the subsequent citations from the Honecker-Chernenko meeting in Moscow is the verbatim East German protocol (*Niederschrift*) of the discussion; as usual, there is little doubt that the record of the proceeding was kept with customary German bureaucratic accuracy; see SED Politburo, *Arbeitsprotokolle*, J IV 2/2.039/280.

²⁸ *Ibid.* (italics mine).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 53 (italics mine).

³⁰ Terms used in lead articles by *The Economist* at the time.

Economic Factors in the Competition with the West

The third pillar on which the status of the Soviet Union as a superpower rested was that of economic potential. This pillar, too, was seriously being eroded. Analytically relevant in this context is Paul M. Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*.³¹ The author looks at the phenomenon of imperial overstretch and starts from the notion that wealth is usually needed to underpin military power, and military power is usually needed to acquire and protect wealth. He continues that the relative strengths of the leading nations in world affairs never remain constant, principally because of the uneven rate of growth among different societies and of the technological and organizational breakthroughs which bring greater advantage to one society than to another. Once their productive capacity is enhanced, they find it easier to sustain the burdens of paying for large-scale armies and fleets. If, however, too large a proportion of the state's resources is diverted from the creation of wealth and allocated instead to military purposes, this is likely to lead to a weakening of national power over the longer term. Furthermore, if a state overextends itself strategically it runs the risk that the potential benefits from external expansion may be outweighed by the expense of this endeavor. He considers this a dilemma which becomes acute if the nation concerned has entered a period a relative economic decline.³² The Soviet Union in the late 1970s had entered such a phase.

The CPSU program of 1961, still valid in the 1980s, had predicted that the USSR would overtake the United States in production by 1970. But, starting from 1975, the official USSR statistical annuals began to show Soviet national income as unchanged at the same proportion of US national income, namely at 67 percent. Catching up with and overtaking the United States had officially ceased. Furthermore, the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) in Moscow made its own calculations and put the estimate of Soviet national income at only *half* of the American volume. It also concluded that the gap was widening rather than narrowing.³³ Soviet unofficial estimates later put the Soviet-American national income ratio even lower than that.³⁴

Table 1. Soviet Economic Growth, 1965-1985				
A. Soviet official measures				
	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1981-85
NMP produced	7.7	5.7	4.2	3.5
NMP utilized	7.1	5.1	3.9	3.2
Gross industrial output	8.5	7.4	4.4	3.6
Gross agricultural output a)	3.9	2.4	1.7	1.1
Investment a)	7.4	7.2	5.2	3.2
Capital stock	7.5	7.9	6.8	6.0
Electric power	7.9	7.0	4.5	3.6
Oil, coal and gas	5.2	5.4	4.2	2.5
B. CIA estimates b)				
GNP	5.1	3.0	2.3	1.9
Industrial output	6.4	5.5	2.7	1.9
Agricultural output	3.6	-0.6	0.8	2.1

³¹ Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987).

³² *Ibid.*, pp. xv-xvi.

³³ Information received from IMEMO researchers by this author and Philip Hanson (University of Birmingham).

³⁴ Estimates by Khanin and Selyunin.

Investment	5.5	4.3	4.3	3.4
Capital stock	7.4	8.0	6.9	6.2
Labor (manhours)	2.0	1.7	1.2	0.7

Notes: All output series, and the investment and capital stock series are in constant prices, i.e. they denote "real" changes. The Soviet official series, however, are known to contain an element of hidden inflation and therefore are upward biased. Note a: For five-year periods, the growth rates shown are those between the total for the period and the total for the preceding five-year period. Note b: At 1982 ruble factor cost.

Sources: *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR* (various years); *Pravda*, January 24, 1988; CIA, Handbook of Economic Statistics 1986; CIA and DIA, Gorbachev's Modernization Program: A Status Report, Paper prepared for the Subcommittee on Security Economics of the US Congress Joint Economic Committee, 19 March 1987.

The Soviet economists' sense of urgency was sharpened by the fact that, in the second half of the 1980s, labor and capital inputs were doomed to slow more rapidly and natural-resource exploitation costs to rise faster; a mere extrapolation of past trends thus indicated that the Soviet economy was heading for zero and then negative growth.

Growth, of course, is only one aspect of economic development. When looking at a country's status, prestige and influence in international affairs, other factors are equally important. These concern the quality and technological level of its products, its share in world commodity and financial markets, international investments, and private and government assistance programs. In all of these dimensions, the Soviet Union was performing poorly. Innovation was limited to the military sphere, with hardly any spillover to the civilian economy. The design features, reliability and technological sophistication of its industrial products were such that they were, even with large price rebates, hopelessly uncompetitive in comparison with Western products. The structure of the Soviet Union's foreign trade very much resembled that of a developing country: the USSR exported large quantities of raw materials, notably oil and natural gas, and imported machinery. Its share in world trade at about 4 percent was far lower than that of the United States, West Germany or Japan. With an economy run by the state, the Soviet Union provided no private investment, which had proven to be an important factor of growth for many of the economies of newly industrializing countries, such as Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and, more recently, also China. The Soviet Union's share in economic assistance programs was also small. It lacked the West's private programs, and government assistance lagged far behind Western shares. Aid commitments were sometimes impressive but actual disbursements small. In accordance with the imperial and ideological paradigm, strategic considerations typically determined aid. But there were also major problems with Soviet aid provided: servicing and spare parts were difficult to obtain, and those regimes that were shifting from the acquisition to the consolidation of power and to economic construction frequently found that the benefits of cooperation with the West outweighed those of the Soviet connection.

Whereas such deficiencies were serious enough *per se*, the main concern of the Soviet leaders in the 'harsh decade' of the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s was the impact of the deceleration of economic growth and lagging technological innovation on the military-industrial complex and the armed forces.³⁵ Starting from the second half of the 1970s, growth of Soviet military expenditures in real terms based on 1970 prices was estimated as having slowed from about 4 to 2 percent *per annum*; no growth was recorded any longer in military procurement.³⁶ Such trends, according to Western analysts, were not the result of conscious decisions by the political

³⁵ See Seweryn Bialer, 'The Harsh Decade', chapter 4 in his *The Soviet Paradox: External Expansion, Internal Decline*, Vintage Books (New York: Random House, 1986), pp. 57-80.

³⁶ According to CIA calculations, *USSR: Measures of Economic Growth and Development, 1950-1980*, Studies Prepared for the Use of the Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress, Washington, D.C., December 1982, p. 54.

leadership but the inexorable result of an the overall slowdown of the Soviet economy.³⁷ Even political leaders ignorant of economic affairs - essentially all of the Soviet leaders from Stalin to Gorbachev - could no longer ignore the fact that (1) the share of military expenditures in the gross national product could not continue to rise indefinitely; (2) a technologically advanced military sector cannot exist in isolation from the economy; (3) the future effectiveness and modernity of the armed forces was being eroded by the economic deficiencies; and (4) something drastic needed to be done, that is, basic structural reform needed to be introduced and replace the traditional tinkering with the system and yet another round of 'administrative streamlining'. The Soviet military certainly were getting very restless about the political leadership's inability to guarantee a level of technological sophistication in the military-industrial complex that would guarantee parity, or parity plus, with the United States.³⁸ Perhaps conscious of the dissatisfaction inside the main pillar of Soviet global power, Brezhnev addressed the top military leaders in the Kremlin only two weeks before his death. He attempted to reassure them that they would get everything they needed. But he also had to tell them the that 'politics can only be effective if it is based on real economic and military power'.³⁹

It is this setting into which Reagan's 'Star Wars' or Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) initiative of March 1983 has to be placed. As Dobrynin has pointed out, 'Our physicists, headed by Academician Yevgenii Velikhov, were as skeptical as many of their American counterparts, but their views hardly carried much weight ... Our leadership was convinced that the great technical potential of the United States had scored again and treated Reagan's statement as a real threat'.⁴⁰ Such perceptions were not only held in the Andropov and Chernenko interregnum but also by Gorbachev.⁴¹ In fact, the new party leader even more strongly than his predecessors recognized science and technology as important factors of global political influence and Reagan's Star Wars not simply as one more of the many gyrations of the arms competition but as a fundamental challenge to the USSR in the East-West competition. His response to this challenge set in motion far-reaching processes with unintended consequences and dynamics that went out of control.

The perceived seriousness of the challenge can vividly be demonstrated in a letter sent by Gorbachev to Honecker on 12 September 1985.⁴² The Soviet party leader wrote that the 'necessity of an intensification of the socio-economic development' lay not only in the internal tasks which the CPSU had set itself but the 'external factor' was also increasing in importance: 'The West has emphatically embraced scientific-technological progress and in the struggle against socialism puts [the emphasis] above all on technological warfare.' He contended that SDI had 'not only military but also great economic significance'. Based on a policy of export restrictions the 'leadership of the USA is conducting a policy of a "pre-programmed technological lag of the socialist countries"'.⁴³

Gorbachev underlined the comprehensive nature of the challenge, deploring the Reagan administration's attempt to enlist the Western European countries for such a strategy. These had

³⁷ See, for instance, Abraham S. Becker, *Sitting on Bayonets: The Soviet Defense Burden and the Slowdown of Soviet Defense Spending*, Rand / UCLA Center for the Study of Soviet International Behavior, The Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, CA, JRS-01, December 1985.

³⁸ For the idea that the top party and military leadership disagreed about the level of resources to be allocated to the military, and that such disagreements may have been connected with the dismissal of chief of staff Ogarkov in 1984, see Jeremy R. Azrael, *The Soviet Civilian Leadership and the Military High Command*, The RAND Corporation, R-3521-AF, June 1987; see also Dale R. Herspring, 'Nikolay Ogarkov and the Scientific-Technical Revolution in Soviet Military Affairs', *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (January 1987), pp. 29-59.

³⁹ Soveshchanie voenachal'nikov v Kremle, *Pravda*, 28 October 1982.

⁴⁰ Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 528.

countered SDI by the Eureka program of European coordination and cooperation in the high technology sphere. Immense resources were being devoted to it. 'We do not intend to insulate us from scientific-technological cooperation with the capitalist countries', he continued. However the United States strategic design 'poses in all sharpness the necessity for the member countries of CMEA of accelerating scientific-technological progress' and in a foreseeable time frame 'to assume leading positions' in that sphere.⁴⁴ He therefore suggested, in vain as it turned out, to advance the date for the adoption of CMEA's Comprehensive Program for the period until 2000 and even before the adoption of this program to embark on large-scale joint projects of scientific-technological cooperation and the creation of a common fund for the financing of such projects.⁴⁵

Gorbachev impressed upon other party leaders the gravity of the challenge. At the October 1985 summit meeting of the member states of the Warsaw Pact in Sofia, he told the assembled party chiefs that 'we clearly recognize the dangerous military-political consequences of SDI'.⁴⁶ He again interpreted Reagan's initiative as an 'attempt to secure a permanent technological superiority of the West over the socialist community and, by the way, not only over it but also over the [United States] own allies'. He again interpreted Eureka both as a European response to SDI and an integral part of an 'overall line of the West' with military industry in the United States and Western Europe attempting to maximize profit. Furthermore, 'We cannot but recognize [the fact] that the imperialist states create their own scientific-technological programs which are in many ways subordinated to the tasks of struggle against the socialist community.' Again he saw the necessary Warsaw Pact response as consisting in 'the fastest possible development of scientific-technological integration. We have to solve these problems more effectively than the capitalists'.⁴⁷

It is obvious from SED archival sources that Gorbachev initially thought that the GDR and to a lesser extent Czechoslovakia could play an important part in countering the military-technological challenge emanating from the United States. As he told Honecker in private, in contrast to the Soviet Union under Brezhnev, 'the GDR looked around everywhere in the world for the highest level [of the scientific-technological progress] and drew [the appropriate] consequences for the development of its own products. It succeeded rapidly to increase its labor productivity and also in terms of quality quickly to catch up with the advanced countries'.⁴⁸

Gorbachev, however, faced a dual problem, one objective, the other subjective. Objectively, the GDR was far from being even close to Western levels of science and technology; it could make no significant contribution to countering SDI or any other major Western military-technological

⁴¹ Gorbachev in retrospect has deemphasized the importance of SDI. For instance, at a conference on 'A World Restored: Reflections on Ending the Cold War', organized by West Point Military Academy, October 8-9, 1995, he stated that the Soviet Union had an advanced research program and was ready for cost effective responses. 'SDI was not decisive in our movement to a new relationship; change in the Soviet Union was the decisive factor.' (From notes taken by one of the participants.) However, as the following will show, Gorbachev thought differently when he was in power.

⁴² Gorbachev letter to Honecker, 12 September 1995, verbatim, SED, Central Party Archives, IV 2/2.035/58.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* The Comprehensive Program was first adopted by Comecon in 1971 and revised several times thereafter. In Soviet and East German parlance, the term of 'complex program' is often used. This literal translation from Soviet and East German sources may be misleading. What is meant here is not 'complexity' but 'comprehensiveness'.

⁴⁶ Gorbachev's speech at the meeting of the Warsaw Pact's Political Consultative Committee, October 22, 1985, in Sofia, SED, Central Party Archives, J IV, 1/2A/2811.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Record (*Niederschrift*) of talks between Gorbachev and Honecker on the occasion of Honecker's visit to Moscow on 28 September 1988, SED Central Party Archives, J IV 2/1/685.

challenge. Subjectively, Gorbachev was still under the impression that the GDR was being pulled into the Western orbit by financial commitments. On the latter issue, as Politburo member and CC secretary for economic affairs in 1973-1976 Werner Krolkowski was later to reveal, 'at every meeting with Honecker, the Soviet party leaders - Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko and Gorbachev - warned of the great danger of indebtedness to the West'.⁴⁹ At one of these meetings in East Berlin, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the GDR, 'Brezhnev, in front of the assembled [SED] Politburo, pounded his fist on the table and accused Honecker of leading the GDR into bankruptcy'. The East German party leader pretended to take the criticism seriously and had proposals put before the Politburo to halve the total debt of the GDR in the 1980s. But these proposals were as unrealistic as his previous policies. No serious attempt was made to fulfill the plans, and the level of debt continued to increase.⁵⁰ In July 1983, West German banks extended and the government guaranteed a credit to East Germany in the amount of DM 1 billion. In June 1984, on a visit in Moscow, Honecker was again warned not to increase GDR dependencies on West Germany. Honecker chose not to follow the advice, and in late July 1984 another major West German government guaranteed credit to East Germany, in the amount of DM 950 million, was announced. Unacceptably from Moscow's perspective, the West German economic and financial benefits were linked to East German political concessions, leading to the above-mentioned August 1984 emergency meeting in Moscow.

The objective inability of the GDR significantly to assist the Soviet Union in counteracting the United States military-technological challenge and Gorbachev's perceptions of East Germany, for financial and economic reasons, drifting into a westerly direction point to the larger problem of the 'costs of empire' in the Soviet bloc. This problem consisted in the inefficiency of CMEA and, in particular, Soviet subsidization of Eastern Europe in the form of cheap oil and gas; overpayment for industrial products relative to world market prices; and grudging acceptance of inferior quality industrial products, the Soviet economic planning authorities realizing that the higher quality commodities were being diverted to the hard currency market. In a normally functioning empire, of course, the metropole is not supposed to accept such a statue of affairs. The dependencies are meant to provide benefits to the center rather than *vice versa*.

Looking now at the crumbling three pillars of the Soviet imperial edifice in conjunction, is it fair to say that the collapse of the structure ultimately occurred as a result of the West having deliberately and consistently chiseled away at the stone? Did the West, in other words, undo the East?⁵¹

Did the West Undo the East?

The most appropriate answer to this question is probably, yes, *indirectly*. In order to explain this reply, several fallacies need to be disposed of. The first is the idea of historic *inevitability*. It is strange indeed that hardly anyone predicted the Soviet collapse, that it was improbable or even impossible, but now, in retrospect, many analysts claim that it was inevitable. This non-Marxist notion of determinism and alleged 'objective laws of development' ignores the role of kidney failure in history. For, as Dmitrii Shlapentokh has observed, had it not been for Andropov's illness and premature death, Soviet communism would in all likelihood still be around. Chinese communism certainly is.

⁴⁹ Hand written notes by Krolkowski dated 16 January 1990, as published by Peter Przybylski, *Tatort Politbüro: Die Akte Honecker* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1991), Doc. 22, p. 327.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ This is the title of Stephen Sestanovich's contribution to the symposium on 'The Strange Death of Soviet Communism: An Autopsy', *The National Interest*, No. 31 (Spring 1993), pp. 26-34.

The second is the opinion that Gorbachev was so impressed or *intimidated* by military pressures exerted by the United States, and by what Richard Löwenthal called 'counterimperialism', that he was *compelled* progressively to dismantle the three concentric rings of empire. Yet a different Soviet leadership combining toughness with flexibility could very well have decided to embark upon a contraction of external involvement and limitation of ambitions and a limited retreat rather than allow the disintegration of the whole imperial system. Nuclear weapons and the tremendous Soviet superiority in conventional arms were instruments effective enough for several years or even decades to fend off external military challenges and pressures. The same applies to the means of repression and coercion available to the party leadership domestically.

A third fallacy is the very opposite of the previous idea. It is the claim, advanced by Georgii Arbatov, to the effect that 'Reagan's "tough" policy and intensified arms race' actually *prolonged* the Cold War because in the tense international situation 'the conservatives and reactionaries were given predominant influence'. Reagan had 'made it practically impossible to start reforms after Brezhnev's death' although 'Andropov had such plans'. He had also made it 'more difficult for Gorbachev to cut military expenditures'.⁵² If international relations are an interaction process, the opposite would seem to be equally plausible. The 'tough' policy adopted by the adversary could be used domestically for underlining the negative consequences of giving priority to the military instrument ('safeguarding security by military-technical means') and arguing that major changes in approach were needed. This line of argument was, in fact, used by Gorbachev in his controversies with the hard-line opposition once it became clear that countering the military-technological challenges by corresponding Soviet efforts and more rapid integration in CMEA showed no promise.

The fourth fallacy is the idea that the fall of the empire was a direct result of *economic collapse*, which in turn was caused by the crushing weight of *military expenditures*. As one analyst put this argument, 'No other industrialized state in the world for so long spent so much of its national wealth on armaments and military forces. Soviet militarism, in harness with communism, destroyed the Soviet economy and thus hastened the self-destruction of the Soviet empire.'⁵³ The problem with this point of view is that 'the defense burden cannot be shown to have increased in the 1980s'.⁵⁴ Furthermore, as Vladimir Kontorovich has argued,

Poor economic performance alone cannot directly and immediately destroy a political system. That requires political action - an uprising, a failed reform, an invasion, or some similar disruption. An economic explanation of the collapse must connect causally the political actions which destroyed the Soviet system to their economic context. Such a connection is far from self-evident.⁵⁵

Such observations have been validated by Gregorii Khanin, an economist not known for over-estimating Soviet growth. He has estimated that the Soviet national income growth rate swung from -2 percent *per annum* in 1981-82 to 1.8 percent in 1983-88. The official industrial production growth rate gained one percentage point in 1983-85 compared with 1981-82. Income per capital was growing in 1983-88 at an annual rate of 0.8 percent (Khanin, national income) or 1.2. percent (according to CIA estimates, gross national product).⁵⁶ It was only in and after 1989 that a severe recession set in leading, according to official data, to drops of 2 percent in GNP and

⁵² In a memorandum to Charles W. Kegley, Jr., on November 7, 1991, as quoted in Charles W. Kegley, Jr., 'How Did the Cold War Die? Principles for an Autopsy', *Mershon International Studies Review*, Vol. 38 (1994), pp. 14-15.

⁵³ Fred Charles Iklé, 'Comrades in Arms: The Case for a Russian-American Defense Community', *The National Interest*, No. 26 (Winter 1991-92), p. 28.

⁵⁴ See Fred Chernoff, 'Ending the Cold War: The Soviet Retreat and the U.S. Military Buildup', *International Affairs* (London), Vol. 67, No. 1 (January 1991), p. 111.

⁵⁵ Vladimir Kontorovich, 'The Economic Fallacy', *The National Interest*, No. 31 (Spring 1993), p. 35.

4 percent in national income in 1990; 15-17 percent in 1991; and more than 20 percent in 1991.⁵⁷

Based on these considerations, the role of the West in the demise of the Soviet empire and ultimately the collapse of the Soviet system should be considered to have occurred as the result of developments in several stages. The progression of events, or action and reaction cycles, can be summarized as follows. Gorbachev realized in 1985 that the Soviet Union was falling behind the West in the 'historic competition between the two opposed socio-economic systems'. He attempted, as a consequence, to reinvigorate, improve and modernize the system, explicitly using Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP) as a frame of reference. Internationally, as Lenin had done, he looked for a relaxation of tensions and a 'breathing space' (*peredyshka*). But by the end of 1986 he had to recognize that the traditional methods of 'mobilizing the reserves of the system' and limited détente were not enough to provide for a substantial amelioration of internal and external conditions.

In 1987, starting with the CC plenum of that month, he embarked on the fateful road of 'radical reform', significantly extending the scope of glasnost', embarking on 'democratization' in domestic political affairs and the New Thinking in international security policy, giving substance to the until then hollow slogan of 'Europe, our common home' (*Evropa, nash obshchii dom*) and introducing, in 1988, the 'freedom of choice' (*svoboda vybora*) to apply to the domestic political and foreign policy orientation of the countries of Eastern Europe. At that stage, it would seem, Gorbachev acted very much as an agent of his own free will.

The next phase, however, demonstrated that he was also behaving like a 'sorcerer's apprentice', setting in motion dynamics that were to spin out of control - a trend reenforced by his own indecision and inability or unwillingness consistently to stay on the road of radical reform. An important gap opened therefore between domestic and foreign policy. In the latter dimension, he was widening the scope of the New Thinking. But in domestic affairs he stopped short of replacing one form of legitimacy (Marxism-Leninism and the communist party) by popular legitimacy. For instance, he failed to rally the radically reformist, social-democratic forces of the party under his leadership and shed the unreformable dead wood. He also refused to put his presidency and a new parliamentary system up for popular endorsement.

This inconsistency coupled with the widening gyrations of *glasnost'* and the constant attacks on corruption led in the subsequent period to a progressive delegitimation of ideology and a severe erosion of the authority and effectiveness of communist party rule. The old system was thus disintegrating but another one was not put in place. Drift and erosion at the center increased the tendencies in the Union republics, most pronounced in the Baltic states after 1988, for greater autonomy and then independence. The CPSU, and thereby the Soviet Union, was beginning to split along republican lines.

In the final phase, this process was enhanced by the personal rivalry between Yeltsin and Gorbachev. Institutionally, this took the form of conflict between the emerging new Russia and the old Soviet Union. It was a competition in which Yeltsin obviously had the better cards since he had popular legitimacy after the June 1991 elections. But it also had the effect of destroying the Soviet Union since, beginning in the summer of 1990, Yeltsin encouraged both the Union republics and autonomous republics in the Russian federation 'to take as much sovereignty as you

⁵⁶ Gregory Khanin, 'Economic Growth in the 1980s', in Michael Ellman and Vladimir Kontorovich, eds., *The Disintegration of the Soviet Economic System* (London: Routledge, 1992), as quoted by Kontorovich, 'The Economic Fallacy', p. 39.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

can digest'.⁵⁸ This process also led to the catastrophic contraction of production because of the rupture of the closely interwoven fabric of interrepublican economic exchanges.

It is thus necessary analytically to separate the dissolution of the Soviet empire, on the one hand, from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Soviet system, on the other. The former was essentially a process that had, relatively speaking, more conceptual coherence and was more consistently managed than the latter. Certainly, once the paradigm of the old thinking was replaced by that of the New Thinking, unintended consequences and unexpected developments also occurred in the international sphere. This included German unification. But the international developments by and large still remained within the parameters of the new paradigm and were made possible by Gorbachev's conscious decision not to use force in order to arrest the processes of change. It would be unfair to Gorbachev to claim, therefore, that his New Thinking was merely a response to the Reaganite 'stick'. Equally important for the evolution of his policies of devolution and dissolution of empire was the Kohl and Genscher 'carrot' (and the Reagan and Bush administration's switch to that inducement). It made it possible for Gorbachev to disband the external empire in a peaceful and cooperative fashion rather than forcing him to preside over a cataclysmic explosion or implosion.

⁵⁸ In a speech in Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan, in August 1990, as quoted in Dunlop, *The Rise of Russia and the Fall of the Soviet Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 62.

Großmacht Rußland.

Zum Selbstverständnis in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart

von Gerhard Simon

Die europäische Geschichte ist die Geschichte vom Auf- und Abstieg großer Mächte. Dabei lautet das allgemeine Urteil: Aufstieg zur Großmacht bedeutet Macht, Wohlstand, Reichtum und Glück; Abstieg aber ist gleichbedeutend mit Ohnmacht, Armut, Elend und Unglück. Ein genauerer Blick auf die Geschichte zeigt allerdings sehr rasch, daß dies Urteil falsch ist. Es gibt zahlreiche Beispiele dafür, daß Menschen und Gesellschaften in abgestiegenen Großmächten in Wohlstand und sozialem Frieden lebten und leben; das gilt etwa für die untergegangenen Großmächte der frühen Neuzeit Schweden und die Niederlande, vor allem aber für Westdeutschland nach 1945.

Auf der anderen Seite konnte der Aufstieg zur Großmacht begleitet sein von wirtschaftlicher Rückständigkeit des Landes, sozialem Elend der Massen und der willkürlichen Beschränkung der persönlichen Freiheitsrechte. Ein Beispiel für Großmacht bei gleichzeitiger Marginalisierung der Menschen ist Rußland/Sowjetunion.

Mit diesen Einschränkungen soll nicht in Abrede gestellt werden, daß Großmacht nach außen und Wohlstand und Partizipation im Inneren sich auch parallel entfaltet haben. Ein Beispiel dafür bieten die USA, die 1918 bereits "unbestritten die stärkste Macht der Welt waren"⁵⁹ und zugleich das einzige Land, in dem es schon vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg Massenwohlstand in unserem heutigen Verständnis gab. Das Streben nach Großmacht-Status war in der europäischen Geschichte der Neuzeit eine Selbstverständlichkeit. Sowohl für diejenigen, die für sich eine Chance sahen, als auch für die Chancenlosen. Großmacht fand vor allem in militärischer Stärke und Leistungsfähigkeit ihren Ausdruck, die natürlich ohne entsprechende ökonomische Ressourcen nicht denkbar waren. Großmacht bedeutete Sicherheit gegenüber Bedrohungen von außen, Befriedung im Inneren und sollte insofern allen zugute kommen. Alle, das waren zunächst die ständischen Gesellschaften und seit dem Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts in zunehmendem Maß die Nationen.

Rußland befand sich bis zum Jahre 1700 am Rande Europas und konnte schon deshalb nicht als eine europäische Großmacht gelten. Der Eintritt in die europäische Staatenwelt vollzog sich mit dem nordischen Krieg, d.h. mit dem Sieg über die Großmacht Schweden und der Eröffnung des Zugangs zur Ostsee, den der Moskauer Staat seit dem 16. Jahrhundert erstrebt hatte. Unmittelbar nach dem Frieden von Nystad nahm Peter I. im Oktober 1721 den Imperator(= Kaiser)-Titel an und legte den Zaren-Titel ab - einer jener symbolischen Akte, mit denen die russische Politik ihre europäischen Ansprüche deutlich machte. Einer der bedeutendsten geistlichen Mitarbeiter Peters, Erzbischof Feofan Prokopovič, hielt anläßlich des Staatsaktes eine Anrede: Durch die Taten Peters seien die Untertanen "aus der Finsternis der Unwissenheit zum Theater des Ruhmes vor der ganzen Welt" geführt und "in die Gesellschaft der gesitteten Völker eingefügt" worden.⁶⁰

Der Kaiser in Wien war zunächst nicht bereit, dem russischen Herrscher den Kaiser-Titel zuzubilligen, was nicht zu überraschen braucht. Interessant ist aber die Begründung der Wiener Regierung für die Ablehnung der neuen Titulatur. Es sei nämlich ein Widersinn, wenn der

⁵⁹ P. Kennedy, Aufstieg und Fall der großen Mächte. Ökonomischer Wandel und militärischer Konflikt von 1500 bis 2000, Frankfurt/M. 1991, S. 17.

⁶⁰ R. Wittram, Peter I. Czar und Kaiser. Zur Geschichte Peter des Großen in seiner Zeit, Bd. II, Göttingen 1964, S. 463.

christliche Kirchenleib, dessen oberstes weltliches Haupt der Kaiser des Heiligen Römischen Reiches sei, "bald zwey oder noch mehrere Köpfe" bekäme.⁶¹ Mit anderen Worten, man ging in Wien 1721 mit Selbstverständlichkeit davon aus, daß Rußland ein Teil der europäischen Christenheit war. Rußland ist in den kommenden 200 Jahren sowohl seiner Selbsteinschätzung nach als auch in den Augen der anderen eine Großmacht und ein akzeptierter Spieler auf dem europäischen Theater gewesen. Eine balance of power ohne Rußland war nicht mehr denkbar. Nach 1815 bildete sich ein festes Konzert der fünf großen europäischen Mächte heraus, die Subjekte und Objekte dieser Gleichgewichtspolitik waren und dem europäischen Kontinent aufs Ganze gesehen eine erstaunlich lange Friedensperiode sicherten.

Drei Dinge müssen dabei bedacht werden:

1. Rußlands selbstverständliche Teilnahme an der Politik der europäischen Mächte im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert bedeutete nicht, daß eine Europäisierung Rußlands im umfassenden Sinn der Angleichung von Staat und Gesellschaft an alteuropäische Muster stattfand. Die Probleme Rußlands bis heute rühren gerade daher, daß dies nicht geschah. Der russische Sozialkörper wurde durch die Europäisierung vielmehr gespalten in weitgehend an europäische Verhältnisse angegliche Oberschichten und die anderen vier Fünftel der vorwiegend bäuerlichen Bevölkerung, die vom technisch-zivilisatorischen Fortschritt, politischer Partizipation, Nationsbildung und Klassenkampf weitgehend unberührt blieben.
2. Das Rußländische Reich (Rossijskaja Imperija) war **eine** der europäischen Großmächte. Weder hat Rußland eine Hegemonie über Europa angestrebt noch hätten die Ressourcen ausgereicht, eine solche Vormachtstellung - möglicherweise gegen alle anderen zusammen - über längere Zeit aufrechtzuerhalten. Den Höhepunkt des russischen Einflusses in Europa brachten die Jahrzehnte vom Wiener Kongreß (1815) bis zum Krimkrieg (1853-56), als Rußland die entscheidende Garantiemacht für die Erhaltung des monarchisch-konservativen Status quo gegen alle demokratischen, nationalen und revolutionären Umwälzungsversuche war. Wohl auch aus diesem Grund widerstand die russische Politik der Versuchung, sich 1848/49 zu einer Hegemonialmacht aufzuwerfen, obwohl eine solche Möglichkeit aufgrund der russischen Militärintervention bestand, die nötig wurde, um das Feuer der Revolution in Europa auszutreten. Die seit dem 19. Jahrhundert vor allem im Westen verbreitete Vorstellung, das Rußländische Reich strebe die Weltherrschaft an, gehört in das Arsenal der Russophobie und taugt nicht zur Beschreibung der Realität vor 1917.
3. Außenpolitik wurde in Rußland vom Herrscher bzw. von einem kleinen Kreis von Vertrauten und Ministern gemacht. Teilweise und zeitweise wurde diese Regel in den 1870er Jahren durchbrochen, als sich zum ersten Mal eine öffentliche Meinung in Rußland in außenpolitischen Fragen artikuliert und von der Regierung im panslavistischen Geist ein Eingreifen zugunsten der orthodoxen Slaven auf dem Balkan gegen das Osmanische Reich und die Donaumonarchie verlangte. Die kaiserliche Regierung hat diesem Druck teilweise nachgegeben, ihr eigentliches Ziel, die Beherrschung der Meerengen am Bosphorus oder gar Konstantinopels, jedoch nicht erreicht. In sowjetischer Zeit wurden die Grundsatzentscheidungen der Außenpolitik ebenfalls vom Führer und von einem kleinen Kreis von Vertrauten getroffen. Das gilt sowohl für die Expansionsphase von Stalin bis Brežnev wie auch für die Schrumpfungsphase unter Gorbačev. Eine Einwirkung der Gesellschaft oder auch nur der KPdSU auf die Außenpolitik gab es nicht.

Mit der bolschewistischen Machtergreifung änderten sich die übrigen Koordinaten der Großmachtpolitik jedoch radikal: Eine Politik der balance of power oder die Teilnahme am Konzert

⁶¹ Ebd., S. 470f.

der Mächte kam nicht mehr in Frage, sie galten als Verrat und Konterrevolution. An ihre Stelle trat die Erwartung der Weltrevolution, die alle bisherige Außenpolitik überflüssig machen würde. In der Praxis hieß das zunächst internationale Isolierung Sowjetrußlands und dann nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg Aufbau eines Blocks sozialistischer abhängiger Staaten um das "Vaterland des Sozialismus" im Zentrum. Die auf diesen Voraussetzungen gewachsene Selbstwahrnehmung prägt auch heute die Mentalität; sie soll in fünf Punkten charakterisiert werden:

1. Das revolutionäre Selbstbewußtsein beruhte darauf, daß wir nicht so sind wie sie. Auf dem Weg des Fortschritts lag Rußland jetzt vorn, die anderen würden folgen. Die Umsetzung dieser Führungsposition im Prinzip in die widerspenstige, z.B. ökonomische Realität ("Einholen und Überholen") erschien den Bolschewisten nur eine Frage der (kurzen) Zeit.

Dieses überlegene messianische Selbstbewußtsein verband die Revolutionäre mentalitätsmäßig mit den Slavophilen. Auch die Slavophilen und die gröber geschnitzten Panslavisten seit den 1870er Jahren argumentierten, daß die Europäisierung Rußlands gerade der falsche Weg sei, daß die europäische Kultur degeneriert sei und vor dem Untergang stehe. Die Zukunft aber werde der aus Rußland kommenden Kultur gehören, sie werde die europäische ersetzen.

Das messianisch-revolutionäre Selbstbewußtsein hatte von Anfang an einen starken patriotischen Unterton, der dann seit den 1930er Jahren offen zutage trat: Das ewig rückständige Rußland war durch den einmaligen Akt der Revolution und die Drehung des Bewußtseins mit einem Schlag aus der Nachhut der Geschichte in die Avantgarde katapultiert worden.

2. Europa und die übrige Welt waren jedoch nicht bereit, Rußland auf dem Weg des Fortschritts zum Kommunismus zu folgen. Sowjetrußland geriet vielmehr in eine seit Peter I. undenkbbare internationale Isolierung. Das Bewußtsein der Einkreisung, der Bedrohung von außen ist dann jahrzehntelang auch propagandistisch hochgespielt worden. Die Festungsmentalität wurde zu einem festen Bestandteil des Selbstbewußtseins und aus der Sicht der bolschewistischen Führung zu einem Garant für die Sicherheit und Machterhaltung.

Die Isolierung Sowjetrußlands als Staat fand allerdings ein gewisses Gegengewicht in Form eines von den Revolutionären entwickelten neuartigen Instruments der internationalen Politik: die Kommunistische Internationale. An die Stelle oder neben die Staatenbeziehungen traten die Verbindungen zu Gesinnungsgenossen und Abhängigen im Ausland mit dem Zweck, die Revolution in aller Welt zu fördern. Die Komintern und ihre Nachfolgeorganisationen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg ersetzten das im Prinzip anarchische Verhältnis der großen Mächte zueinander durch eine straff geführte hierarchische Ordnung mit Moskau als Spitze und Zentrale.

Eine vorübergehende Unterbrechung der internationalen Isolierung innerhalb der Staatenwelt trat während des Zweiten Weltkriegs ein. Die siegreiche Kriegskoalition mit den westlichen Demokratien eröffnete der Sowjetunion die Chancen zum Aufbau eines eigenen Machtblocks.

3. Die Blockbildung wurde zur Voraussetzung für den Großmacht-Status nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. Die Basis der internationalen Beziehungen war die Einteilung der Welt in Freunde und Feinde, wobei diese Einteilung als im Prinzip unverrückbar wahrgenommen wurde. Die Freunde, d.h. die Mitglieder des sozialistischen Blocks, waren abhängig von der Sowjetunion. Das galt nicht nur für die Mitglieder des Warschauer Paktes, sondern auch für die geographisch entfernten Angehörigen der Blockgemeinschaft, Kuba oder Vietnam. Die Sowjetunion nahm sich als Großmacht wahr, nicht weil sie Partner und Verbündete hatte, sondern weil Satelliten oder zumindest abhängige Staaten sie als Vormacht anerkannten.

Innerhalb des Blocks gab es keine Integration, sondern eine hierarchische Zuordnung auf die Sowjetunion. Gegenüber dem imperialistischen Klassenfeind galt seit den 1960er Jahren das Prinzip der friedlichen Koexistenz, sozusagen die sowjetische Variante der alten balance of power-Politik. Der grundsätzliche Unterschied bestand darin, daß die friedliche Koexistenz davon ausging, daß aufgrund der ehernen Gesetze der Geschichte das Gewicht des sozialistischen Lagers ständig zu- und des imperialistischen Blocks ständig abnahm. Gleichgewicht war also nicht das Ziel, sondern der Zustand, der überwunden werden sollte.

So waren der sowjetischen Mentalität gleichermaßen fremd: die Gleichgewichts- und Ausgleichsvorstellungen des 19. Jahrhunderts sowie das Prinzip der Integration, das im Westblock seit den 50er Jahren eine zentrale Rolle spielte.

4. Die Sowjetunion stieg in der bipolaren Welt seit den 1950er Jahren von einer Großmacht zu einer Weltmacht auf, d.h. zur Führungsmacht einer der beiden Blöcke. Hieraus resultierte die Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmung, daß es für die UdSSR nur noch einen gleichberechtigten, wenn auch feindlichen Partner auf der gleichen Ebene gab: die USA. Bis 1991 und darüber hinaus wurde der Supermacht-Status von niemandem ernsthaft in Frage gestellt, obwohl alle wußten, daß er ausschließlich auf der militärischen Parität beruhte. Auch diese militärische Parität mit den USA wurde erst um 1970 erreicht und hat wahrscheinlich nicht länger als etwa 15 Jahre bestanden.

Nach dem fast lautlosen Zusammenbruch der Weltmacht Sowjetunion muß es erlaubt sein, die Frage zu stellen, wie weit die Fremd- und Selbsteinschätzung als Supermacht auf Realien beruhte und wie weit auf Rhetorik. Die Sowjetunion war gewiß eine rhetorische Weltmacht; unter geopolitischen Kriterien, d.h. bei Berücksichtigung der politischen, ökonomischen und geistigen Potentiale, war sie es wahrscheinlich nie.

Ich halte es für eine wichtige Aufgabe zukünftiger Forschung zu untersuchen, wie groß die Ressourcen der Weltmacht tatsächlich waren und wie weit sie auf Bluff beruhten. Möglicherweise sind die ökonomischen und militärischen Kapazitäten überschätzt, die inneren Konflikte und Widersprüche aber unterschätzt worden.

Für die eigene Legitimation spielte der Weltmacht-Status allerdings eine zentrale Rolle. Der Weltmacht-Status war zum Revolutionsersatz geworden. Weder schickte sich der Kapitalismus an, endlich zu verfaulen, noch konnte die Sowjetmacht beim Lebensstandard die westlichen Industrieländer einholen und überholen. Dafür aber griff die Sowjetunion seit den 1960er Jahren weit über ihre bisherigen Einflußzonen hinaus und etablierte sich in der Dritten Welt, so daß ihr vom Westblock das Recht zugesprochen wurde, im Prinzip überall auf dem Globus mitzuentcheiden. Viele Menschen in der Sowjetunion zogen aus dem Prestige ihres Staates, der überall beachtet und vielfach gefürchtet wurde, eine gewisse Genugtuung. Wenn man schon nach Wurst Schlange stehen und zehn Jahre auf eine Wohnung warten mußte, so gab es doch Landsleute, die in den Kosmos flogen, und die Mächtigen der ganzen Welt rechneten es sich zur Ehre an, im Kreml empfangen zu werden.

5. Die Sowjetführung selbst demonitierte in der zweiten Hälfte der 1980er Jahre die Weltmacht Sowjetunion. Das geschah nicht aus mangelndem Patriotismus, wie die Roten und Braunen heute in Rußland der Gorbachev- und der Jelzin-Führung vorwerfen, sondern aus der Einsicht, daß die Kräfte seit langem überdehnt worden waren, und daß ein Kollaps drohte, wenn die Sowjetunion ihr Weltmachtengagement nicht radikal reduzierte. Am Ende der Perestrojka stand - entgegen den Intentionen - nicht nur die Liquidierung der Weltmacht UdSSR, sondern die Auflösung des Staates.

Dies liegt heute wie eine schwere traumatische Erfahrung auf dem Land. Die überwiegende Mehrheit der politisch interessierten Eliten hat sich nicht damit abgefunden, daß Rußlands Macht und Einfluß auf einen Bruchteil früherer Größe geschrumpft ist, ja viele bemühen sich um die tapfere Leugnung dieser Tatsache und finden dabei im Westen Unterstützung. Die Mehrheit der Bevölkerung ist politisch uninteressiert, assoziiert aber mit dem Ende der Weltmacht Sowjetunion materiellen Abstieg, soziale Unsicherheit und die Kriminalisierung aller Verhältnisse. Deshalb haben Nostalgie und restaurative Bestrebungen überall Hochkonjunktur.

Die Identitätskrise ist deshalb so tiefgreifend, weil auf der einen Seite nach den sturzflutartigen Umwälzungen der vergangenen zehn Jahre das Bedürfnis stetig zunimmt, zu den stabilen und ruhigen Verhältnissen zurückzukehren, die es angeblich in der Vergangenheit gegeben hat. Aber andererseits ist der Weg zurück versperrt, und zwar sowohl in die sowjetische wie auch in die vorsowjetische Vergangenheit. Denn es gibt heute weder einen Ostblock wie nach 1945 noch ein Konzert der Mächte wie vor 1914. Welches die Staatsidee der Zukunft sein wird, ist offen; ein Konsens darüber liegt in weiter Ferne.

Seit 1992 sind die Stimmen derjenigen immer lauter zu hören, die einerseits die Verluste an Macht und Ansehen beklagen und andererseits mit Nachdruck hervorheben, daß Rußland auch heute eine Großmacht ist und wieder auf dem Weg, eine noch größere zu werden. Die Regierung hat offiziell die Position bezogen, die Rußländische Föderation sei nicht nur Rechtsnachfolger der UdSSR, sondern politischer "Fortsetzer" der Sowjetunion. Daraus folgt als Minimalprogramm der Anspruch, Vormacht gegenüber den Staaten des "nahen Auslands" zu sein und eine Ausdehnung des ehemaligen Westblocks nach Ostmitteleuropa zu verhindern. Mit der "Fortsetzer"-Doktrin schließt Rußland zugleich aus, daß es ein normales Mitglied der europäisch-atlantischen Integrationsstrukturen NATO oder EU werden könnte.

Im öffentlichen Diskurs beherrschen diejenigen das Feld, die Eigenständigkeit, Andersartigkeit und Selbständigkeit Rußlands als Kultur und Großmacht herausstellen und die "russische Idee" als Grundlage der zukünftigen Staatsdoktrin fordern. Deshalb gilt es in der Selbstwahrnehmung als Unterwerfung, Staat und Gesellschaft in Anlehnung an westliche Vorbilder und Erfahrungen umzugestalten. Der Gegensatz zu Polen und den anderen Ländern Ostmitteleuropas könnte größer nicht sein, wo die Betonung der Gleichartigkeit, ja Identität mit dem Westen das Fundament der Selbstwahrnehmung ist. Hier besteht ein Konsens fast aller politischen Gruppen, daß dieser Wesensgehalt jetzt in politische, ökonomische und sicherheitspolitische Realität umgesetzt werden muß.

Für Rußland sind drei Schlußfolgerungen zu ziehen:

1. Die Diskussion über die eigene Großmacht-Rolle in der Zukunft orientiert sich weitgehend an der Vergangenheit. Weder gegenüber dem "nahen Ausland" noch gegenüber Ostmitteleuropa oder dem Westen gibt es neue Konzepte. Vielmehr werden sowjetische Konzepte aus der Zeit vor 1985 wieder aufgenommen mit vielen Abstrichen aufgrund der veränderten Ausgangslage. Die kurzfristigen Aufwallungen der russischen demokratischen Kräfte und der "Atlantiker" in den Jahren 1990/91, die eine Eingliederung Rußlands in die "zivilisierte" Staatenwelt als "normaler" Staat forderten, scheinen vergessen.
2. Die heute noch stärker als vor zehn Jahren offen zutage getretene Rückständigkeit Rußlands wird im öffentlichen Bewußtsein durch die Betonung der Eigen- und Andersartigkeit kompensiert. Damit verbindet sich die Vorstellung, die eigene Kultur- und Machtwelt könne nur durch Abschirmung und Abgrenzung erhalten werden.

3. Peter I. hätte in Rußland heute keine Chance. Die Periode der einschneidenden Veränderungen ist vorerst vorüber. Das Pendel schwingt zurück zur Reaktion, die von vielen als Konsolidierung wahrgenommen wird.

Wirtschaftliche Ressourcen der Großmacht Rußland

von Sergei Aleksashenko

Rußland durchläuft gegenwärtig in allen seinen Lebensbereichen eine umfassende Umwandlung. Es ist sicherlich nicht übertrieben zu behaupten, daß es in der Geschichte des Landes während der letzten Jahrhunderte einen solchen Umbruch nicht gegeben hat. Dieser Wandlungsprozeß braucht in jedem Fall aber mehrere Jahre oder gar Jahrzehnte. Begonnen hat er 1985, und Rußland kann in diesem Jahr 10 Jahre Transformation feiern. Auf lange Sicht ist die Wirtschaftsreform der Schlüssel zum Erfolg der gesamten Umwandlung. Wenn es Rußland nicht gelingt, die wirtschaftlichen Probleme in der nächsten Zeit zu lösen, wird es seine allgemeinen Schwierigkeiten nicht überwinden.

Haupterfolge

Im Jahre 1992, nach der Auflösung der Sowjetunion, setzte Rußland einen sehr ehrgeizigen wirtschaftlichen Umbauplan in Gang, der den Wunsch widerspiegelte, die Grundprinzipien der Kommandowirtschaft aufzugeben: administrative Preiskontrolle, zentralisierte Verteilung der Ressourcen, administrative Kontrolle über Unternehmensaktivitäten, unrealistische Wechselkurse für den Rubel und ein verschwenderischer "Schwarzmarkt" für ausländische Devisen. Das Schlüsselproblem für die erste reformwillige Regierung war die makroökonomische Stabilisierung, denn Rußland hatte von der Sowjetunion ein überaus großes Ungleichgewicht geerbt: das Haushaltsdefizit betrug mehr als 30 Prozent des BIP, die Nation hatte ihre ausländischen Devisen verbraucht und war unfähig, die schwere Bürde der Außenschulden zu tragen. Obwohl die Preise administrativ unter Kontrolle gehalten wurden, betrug die Inflationsrate 1991 etwa 300 Prozent. Warenmangel, auch von Grundnahrungsmitteln, war keine Seltenheit.

Aufgrund dieser riesigen Probleme, hatten die Reformer 1992 eine schwache politische Position, und als die Regierung und die Zentralbank die Geldmenge innerhalb von zwei Monaten um 100 Prozent erhöhten, um die heimische Industrie zu unterstützen, versagte der Stabilisierungsplan. Die umstrittenste Frage hieß dabei: Wie hoch darf der Preis der Stabilisierung sein, das heißt: Welchen industriellen Rückgang nehmen wir dafür in Kauf? Der wirtschaftliche Niedergang begann in der UdSSR in der Mitte des Jahres 1990, und 1991 ging die Wirtschaftsleistung um 3 Prozent zurück. Der erste Stabilisierungsversuch führte zu einem weiteren Rückgang von etwa 25 Prozent in den ersten neun Monaten des Jahres 1992. Diese Zahl versetzte die politische Führung in Angst. Die finanzielle Unterstützung für die Industrie (monatlich etwa 20-25 Prozent Zuwachs in der Geldversorgung) spielte Ende 1992 eine Rolle: Der Rückgang der Industrieproduktion wurde fünf Monate lang aufgehalten, auch wenn sich Anfang 1993 die Inflation auf 25-30 Prozent verschärfte. Zu Beginn des zweiten Halbjahres 1993 verkündete man aber wiederum, daß die Inflationsrate die größte Gefahr für die Regierung darstelle. Rußland entschied sich, den Reformprozeß langsamer anzugehen.

Im Frühjahr 1993 wurde von der Regierung und der Zentralbank das erste umfassende monetäre Programm ausgearbeitet, das darauf abzielte, bis zum Ende 1993 die Inflationsrate unter 10 Prozent pro Monat zu drücken. Auf dem Gebiet der finanziellen Disziplin wurden radikale Veränderungen vorgenommen: Ab Juni 1993 wurden die reale positive Refinanzierungsrate der Zentralbank fixiert sowie die freien Kredite für GUS Länder gestrichen, die Regierung hörte auf, solchen Firmen Kredite zu gewähren, die Zugang zu den Geldern der Zentralbank hatten, das Haushaltsbudget subventionierte nicht mehr den Wechselkurs für die Importeure, und man setzte

Vierteljahresgrenzen für den Zuwachs der Geldversorgung und für die Kredite der Zentralbank an den Haushalt. Obwohl dieser Plan nicht vollständig durchgesetzt wurde (im letzten Vierteljahr überschritt das Haushaltsdefizit etwas die festgelegte Grenze), so begann die Inflationsrate doch zu sinken: von monatlichen 25 Prozent im ersten Vierteljahr zu 20 Prozent im zweiten und dritten und schließlich 14 Prozent im letzten Vierteljahr 1993, und 12 Prozent im Dezember.

Der nächste Schritt wurde 1994 getan. Das neue, noch strikere finanzielle Programm strebte eine Senkung der Inflationsrate unter monatliche 7 Prozent an und wurde von Regierung und Zentralbank akzeptiert. Mit diesen neuen Zielen vor Augen gelang es der Regierung, alle Ausgaben, die zuvor die Haushaltsgrenzen überschritten hatten, nun innerhalb dieser Grenzen zu halten. Alle Transaktionen der Regierung wurden kontrolliert. Die Zentralbank subventionierte bestimmte Sektoren der Wirtschaft nicht mehr mit Krediten, und man setzte eine eigene Regierungskommission ein, um die Lage am Finanzmarkt zu überprüfen. Sie empfahl der Zentralbank, die Refinanzierungsrate langsam zu senken. Die Durchführung dieses Plans in der ersten Hälfte 1994 führte ab Juni zu einer Senkung der Inflationsrate auf unter 5 Prozent im Monat, der reale Wechselkurs des Rubels gegenüber ausländischen Währungen stieg, die Sparneigung der individuellen Haushalte stieg im Sommer 1994 auf 20-23 Prozent, und viele wechselten ihre Dollarsparguthaben in Rubel. Die industrielle Produktion stabilisierte sich, und das BSP begann wieder zu wachsen.

Dieser Fortschritt in der Stabilisierung dauert bis zur Mitte des Sommers 1994, als jahreszeitliche Faktoren in den Haushaltsausgaben mit einer gewissen Euphorie der Regierung zusammenfielen, die glaubte, im Kampf gegen die Inflation den endgültigen Sieg errungen zu haben. Das Ergebnis war ein Anstieg des Haushaltsdefizits. Mit einer zwei-dreimonatigen Verspätung beeinflusste dies wiederum die Inflationsrate, die im Oktober-November bei 15 Prozent lag.

Die Gefahr einer weiteren Phase hoher Inflation versetzte die russische Regierung in Sorge, und im September 1994 ergriff man ernste Maßnahmen, um den Wirtschaftsplan für 1995 zu entwickeln. Er zielt auf eine Senkung der Inflation in der ersten Hälfte 1995 - die einzige Möglichkeit, um den zukünftigen Wirtschaftsaufschwung in Rußland zu sichern. Die Regierung beschloß, ab 1995 jede direkte Geldfinanzierung einzustellen, der radikalste aller Beschlüsse seit dem Beginn der Wirtschaftsreformen im Januar 1992.⁶² Dieser Schritt war notwendig und eine unabdingbare Voraussetzung für eine erfolgreiche makroökonomische Politik während der Übergangszeit.

Die Annullierung der direkten Geldfinanzierung erweitert das fiskalische Loch im Haushalt der Föderation. Man plant, es durch ausländische und eigene Finanzierungen zu stopfen. Der Wirtschaftsplan für 1995 wird gegenwärtig mit dem IWF ausgehandelt. Dabei geht es um einen Vertrag über einen Kredit in Höhe von 6.8 Mrd. US-Dollar.

Von der UdSSR zur GUS

Die Auflösung der Sowjetunion war ein schmerzhaftes Ereignis für alle Teilrepubliken. Das historische Erbe der UdSSR war ein Mechanismus, wie er in einer einzigen großen Fabrik

⁶² Zwischen 1991-1992 überschritt das Haushaltsdefizit die 30% Grenze des BIP und wurde zu zwei Dritteln von der Zentralbank finanziert. Für 1994 schätzt man das Haushaltsdefizit der Föderationsregierung auf über 11% des BIP, und 6,7% des BIP geht für Finanzierung ab. Für 1995 wird ein Defizit von 7,8% des BIP angestrebt und keine Finanzierung durch die Zentralbank. Gemäß der Pläne der Regierung sollte etwas weniger als 60% des Defizits durch ausländische Anleihen finanziert werden, der Rest (etwas mehr als 40%) durch den heimischen Finanzmarkt. Der Regierungsplan für die Wirtschaftspolitik 1995 wird im allgemeinen vom IWF unterstützt, mit dem Rußland über ein Standby-Abkommen verhandelt.

herrscht: Praktisch alle Unternehmen der UdSSR waren in einem großen technischen System verknüpft. Während der in den 30er Jahren beginnenden industriellen Entwicklung in der UdSSR wurde jede neue industrielle Einheit in eine alles umfassende Produktionskette eingegliedert. Das hieß, daß jede industrielle Einheit in dem bestimmten Bereich ihrer Tätigkeit monopolistisch war und auf dem häuslichen Markt keinen Konkurrenten hatte. Die Auflösung des Landes verursachte eine chaotische Neuverteilung des industriellen Potentials zwischen den einzelnen Ex-Unions-Republiken. In einer solchen Situation hängt der Fortbestand der Industrie davon ab, ob die verschiedenen Staaten in der Lage sind, ihre ökonomische Zusammenarbeit zu organisieren, vor allem in der Geldpolitik. Unglücklicherweise waren die Republiken der ehemaligen UdSSR nicht sehr kooperationsbereit.

Als die Ex-Unions-Republiken die UdSSR verließen, führten sie nicht ihre jeweils eigene Währung ein, auch nicht die baltischen Staaten, sondern benutzten weiterhin den sowjetischen Rubel als legales Zahlungsmittel. Eine Reihe von Republiken gab gleichzeitig noch eigenes Geldzeichen als Quasi-Zahlungsmittel heraus, um das Gleichgewicht auf dem Konsumgütermarkt zu bewahren. Praktisch gab es das seltsame System einer einzigen Währung, die von 15 Zentren ausgegeben wurde. Aufgrund der steigenden positiven Handelsbilanz Rußlands gegenüber all den anderen Republiken (dank der relativen Preissteigerung für Energieressourcen) kam es dazu, daß Rußland alle die anderen Staaten subventionierte. Die Gesamtsumme dieser Subventionen belief sich in der ersten Hälfte 1992 auf etwa 5 Mrd. US-Dollar.

Mitte 1992 gaben die baltischen Staaten ihre eigene Währung (oder Quasi-Währung) heraus, während Rußland ein System des gegenseitigen Clearings (aber immer noch mit Rubeln) einführte, dem alle Republiken angeschlossen waren, die nicht fest begrenzte Summen von sogenannten "technischen" Krediten an ihre Partner ausgaben. Dieses System existierte bis zum April 1993, und die Summe all dieser Kredite belief sich auf etwa 2.5 Mrd. US-Dollar.

Da die anderen GUS Länder nicht den gleichen Weg der Transformation beschritten, bedeutete dies für Rußland eine sehr kostspielige Art der Zusammenarbeit. Im Frühjahr 1993 wurde die Währungsunion aufgelöst. Rußland bestand darauf, daß vor einer weiteren Zusammenarbeit jede Republik ihre eigene Währung einführte. Jede finanzielle Unterstützung wurde von diesem Zeitpunkt ab auf der Basis bilateraler Verträge und mithilfe von Regierungskrediten geleistet. Im Sommer desselben Jahres beendete Rußland mit einem Austausch der Bargeldnoten die Auflösung des gemeinsamen Währungsraums.

Bis heute ist das Problem der wechselseitigen Bezahlung zwischen den ehemaligen sowjetischen Republiken nicht gelöst. Der Großteil der nationalen Währungen ist nicht konvertibel und die Länder haben keine Reserven an ausländischen Devisen. Die positive Handelsbilanz für Rußland führt dazu, daß russische Unternehmen keinen Profit machen, wenn sie in nationalen Währungen bezahlen, weil nicht-russische Währungen ihren Wert verlieren und nur ein begrenzter Vorrat an lieferbaren Waren und Dienstleistungen für den russischen Markt existieren.⁶³ Die Idee einer Währungsunion (ähnlich wie der, die nach dem 2. Weltkrieg in Westeuropa herrschte) ist äußerst beliebt, auch wenn niemand bereit ist, sie finanziell zu unterstützen (wie das damals die USA taten).

Es existieren zwei Szenarien, um die wirtschaftliche Kooperation innerhalb der früheren Sowjetunion zu verbessern. Erstens, alle Republiken führen ernsthafte Wirtschaftsreformen durch, um die nationalen Währungen zu stärken und es zu ermöglichen, ein System der wechselseitigen

⁶³ Diese Situation ist typisch für alle großen Länder der ehemaligen Sowjetunion (Ukraine, Belarus, Kasachstan, Usbekistan). Gleichzeitig gibt es Beispiele, wo kleinere Länder wie Kirgistan mit ihrer Währungsstabilisierung erfolgreicher waren als Rußland. Dennoch ist der Umfang der Wirtschaftskooperation dieser Länder mit der übrigen früheren Sowjetunion aufgrund ihres geringen Industriepotentials begrenzt.

Konvertierbarkeit der Währungen einzuführen, auch wenn es schwer vorstellbar ist, wie die anderen Republiken ihre Handelsbilanzen mit Rußland in kurzer oder mittlerer Frist verbessern können. Zweitens, die anderen Republiken entschließen sich, den russischen Rubel als legale Zahlungsmittel zu benutzen, was ihnen erlaubte, darauf weitere Wirtschaftsreformen aufzubauen. Für dieses Szenarium ist der politische Wille der Politiker in den Republiken vonnöten, da diese Maßnahme zu einer gewissen Aufweichung der nationalen Souveränität führen würde. Dieser Weg wurde in den letzten 20 Monaten von der russischen Regierung aktiv angepriesen, aber niemand akzeptierte diese Lösung, obwohl Belarus vor einem halben Jahr seinen Willen bekundete, sich mit Rußland zu vereinigen.

Daraus resultiert, daß die Auflösung des sowjetischen Wirtschaftsraums wohl weiter fortschreiten wird. Dies wird zu Verlusten in den industriellen Vernetzungen und des industriellen Potentials aller Republiken sowie zu eher autarken, weniger entwickelten Wirtschaften in der Region führen.

Innerrussische Entwicklung

Der Auflösungsprozeß der Sowjetunion in den Jahren 1991-1992 setzte auch innerhalb Rußlands zentrifugale Kräfte frei. Politisch besteht das Land aus 89 Mitgliedern der Föderation. Sie unterscheiden sich alle hinsichtlich Geographie, Geschichte, Bildung und natürlicher Umgebung. Um die UdSSR aufzulösen, verkündete Boris Jelzin als Präsident des Russischen Parlaments 1991 die Idee größerer Unabhängigkeit für die russischen Regionen, was die Position der russischen Führer in ihrem Kampf gegen die sowjetischen stärken sollte. Die praktische Umsetzung dieser Idee schuf große Probleme für Rußlands eigene Integrität: Viele Regionen begannen damit, eigene Gesetze zu verabschieden, die im Gegensatz zu den russischen standen, Regionalführer weigerten sich, nationale Gesetze durchzusetzen, sie hielten Steuern für die Föderation zurück und steckten sie in den eigenen Haushalt, ja, sie gaben sogar Regionalwahlen heraus.

Diese interne Instabilität war zu einem großen Teil durch die allgemeine wirtschaftliche Instabilität und den Mangel an einer klaren Strategie zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung verursacht. Infolge einer größeren makroökonomischen Stabilität in den Jahren 1993-1994 war die Zentralregierung in der Lage, allgemeine Vereinbarungen mit praktisch allen Regionen (außer Tschechien) über die Macht- und Pflichtenverteilung und die Grundprinzipien der neuen Föderation zu treffen.

Um der innerrussischen Instabilität abzuhelpfen, müßte die industrielle Strategie der Nation geändert werden. Zuvor waren die Regionen am einflußreichsten, die am meisten wissenschaftliches und industrielles Potential, meist in Zusammenhang mit der militärischen Produktion, besaßen. Nach der Veränderung der internationalen Position Rußlands und infolge der starken Kürzungen in den Militärausgaben haben diese Regionen ihren Einfluß verloren. Die umfassende wirtschaftliche Transformation führte zu der problematischen Frage: Welche Regionen sind in der Lage, die Grundlage für ein zukünftiges Wirtschaftswachstum zu legen? Drei Möglichkeiten gibt es:

- der Versuch, Erdöl- und Energieressourcen für die Akkumulation von finanziellen Ressourcen zu nutzen, um einen Neuaufbau der verarbeitenden Industrien zu ermöglichen und dem Land eine neue wirtschaftliche Struktur zu verschaffen;

- Ressourcen vom Öl- und Energieexport in die Entwicklung der mit Forschung und Entwicklung verbundenen Sektoren der Militärindustrie zu investieren, um sie noch radikaler für zivile Erzeugung zu nutzen;
- die Entwicklung der Konsumgüterindustrien, die wenig Ressourcen benötigt, hohe Einfuhrtarife erfordert, das Land aber wirtschaftlich unabhängiger macht.

Sicherlich wird keines dieser Szenarien als einzige Strategie verwirklicht werden, wahrscheinlicher ist eine Kombination zweier oder aller drei, aber die zukünftige Aufteilung der Einflüsse und das neue innerrussische Machtgleichgewicht werden entscheiden, welche der drei Strategien die Oberhand gewinnt.

Mittelfristige Perspektiven

Wenn man die mittelfristigen Perspektiven für die russische Wirtschaft analysiert, sollte man zuerst festzustellen versuchen, welches Vorteile Rußland gegenüber anderen Nationen hat. Es ist allgemein anerkannt, daß Rußland riesige Naturschätze besitzt und auf diesem Gebiet eins der reichsten Länder ist. Auf der anderen Seite verfügt Rußland über erhebliche intellektuelle Fähigkeiten. Bei unserem Versuch, die möglichen Vorteile der russischen Wirtschaft herauszufinden, werden wir die Liste der Ressourcen und der Beschränkungen, denen sie unterliegen, durchgehen.

Ressourcen	Beschränkungen
<p>1. Großes Territorium. Rußland besitzt 1/8 der gesamten Erdoberfläche und ist somit das größte Land der Welt. Das große Territorium war ein außerordentlich wichtiger Faktor für die Verteidigungsstrategie in früheren Kriegen, da es sehr schwierig zu besetzen war.</p>	<p>1. Die geographische Lage ist für die wirtschaftliche Tätigkeit nicht vorteilhaft; das Land reicht von Ost nach West über mehr als 6000 km, auch wenn die bewohnten Gebiete vor allem im Süden des Territoriums liegen. Enorme Transportwege sind nötig, vor allem mit der sehr teuren Bahn. Außerdem hat Rußland keinen Zugang zu warmen Meeren, weshalb Seetransporte unmöglich sind. Transportwege von mindestens 4500 km bis zum nächsten Seehafen sind normal.</p> <p>2. Das Klima im größten Teil Rußlands erlaubt kein normales Leben. Mit winterlichen Temperaturen von -50° und mehr sind ungeheure Anstrengungen nötig, um zu überleben und irgend eine Art von Tätigkeit zu vollbringen.</p> <p>3. Eine relativ kleine Bevölkerung. Als das flächengrößte Land der Erde (12,5%) besitzt Rußland nur 2,8% der Erdbevölkerung. Damit ist die Bevölkerungsdichte extrem gering und die Ausbeutung des großen Territoriums kaum durchführbar.</p>
<p>2. Natürliche Ressourcen. Rußland ist eines der reichsten Länder der Erde. Es besitzt praktisch alle Arten von Naturressourcen. In vielen Bereichen verfügt es über die weltweit größten Reserven (Öl, Gas, Holz, Kohle usw.).</p>	<p>4. Die Lage der Ressourcen. Mehrere Jahrhunderte hindurch hat Rußland seine Ressourcen in bewohnten Gegenden ausgebeutet, und diese Ausbeutung war während der letzten 60 Jahre ausnehmend intensiv. Die Folge davon war, daß die Bodenschätze im europäischen Teil Rußlands zur Neige gingen und die Förderindustrien ins westliche Sibirien zogen. Dort waren riesige finanzielle Mittel nötig, um die Förderung in Gang zu setzen, außerdem mußte eine neue Infrastruktur gebaut werden. Des weiteren hatte Rußland es in diesen neuen Regionen mit einem Klima zu tun, welches die Unternehmungen sehr kostspielig macht.</p> <p>5. Wegen der geographischen Faktoren und der geringen Bevölkerungsdichte braucht Rußland riesige Transportsysteme, um die Rohstoffe zu den Raffinerien zu bringen. Der gleiche Grund erfordert die Benutzung von Pipelines, um Öl zu exportieren, was viel teurer ist als Öltanker.</p>
<p>3. Das Bildungsniveau des russischen Volkes gilt als</p>	<p>6. Die Sprache ist das Haupthindernis bei der Verwendung von russischen Arbei-</p>

<p>sehr hoch. Dadurch existiert eine hoch qualifizierte Arbeiterschaft, wobei die Unternehmen mit Löhnen rechnen können, wie sie für Entwicklungsländer typisch sind.</p>	<p>tern. Diese natürliche Barriere ist gegenseitig: auf der einen Seite ist die russische Sprache im Westen nicht populär; auf der anderen Seite hat die Sowjetunion über lange Zeiten hinweg keinen Wert auf das Erlernen von Fremdsprachen gelegt, da Russisch innerhalb des Comecon und im ganzen sowjetischen Block benutzt wurde.</p> <p>4. Der Mangel an modernen Industrien, die eine hoch qualifizierte Arbeiterschaft verlangen. Die Sowjetunion verpaßte die neueste technologische Revolution im Westen zu Beginn der 80er Jahre. Und so hat Rußland die Industrie von gestern geerbt, die tatsächlich keine wettbewerbsfähigen Güter produziert und kein hoch qualifiziertes Personal braucht.</p>
<p>4. In Rußland entstand eine Grundlage für fortschrittliche Technologie, auf der eine zukünftige Erholung der Industrie aufbauen kann.</p>	<p>8. Erfahrung. Diese fortschrittliche Technologie stammt aus der Militärindustrie und konzentrierte sich auch dort, während die zivile Industrie keinen Zugang dazu hatte und nicht weiß, wie sie sie benutzen soll.</p> <p>4. Nicht-Kompatibilität. Die Entwicklung der Technologie und der Wirtschaft im allgemeinen fußte in der Sowjetunion auf dem beherrschenden Prinzip der absoluten Unabhängigkeit von der Außenwelt. Die Folge davon ist, daß Rußlands technologische Leistungen normalerweise aufgrund unterschiedlicher Grundlagen und Philosophie nicht in die westlichen Industrien integriert werden können.</p> <p>10. Die Verwendung von neuen Technologien verlangt viel Kapital, schnelle Gewinne sind nicht zu erwarten. Rußland leidet heute unter einem Mangel an heimischem Kapital, welches wegen der allmählichen Stabilisierungspolitik der russischen Regierung entwertet wurde. Deshalb ist das russische Kapital auf kleine und mittlere Investitionen gerichtet, die große und schnelle Gewinne versprechen. Das ausländische Kapital, welches theoretisch für russische Technologie eingesetzt werden könnte, fließt nur zögerlich nach Rußland.</p>

Schlußbemerkung

Rußland steht vor der größten Herausforderung in seiner Geschichte. Eine erfolgreiche Transformation würde mit Wohlstand belohnt, während ein Fehlschlag der Reformen eine langfristige Depression und Stagnation zur Folge haben könnte. Die Regierung scheint in der Lage zu sein, innerhalb der nächsten Jahre die Wirtschaft im makroökonomischen Bereich zu stabilisieren. Aber die umfassende Umstrukturierung des realen Sektors ist eine Aufgabe, die eine sehr viel längere Zeit und größere Anstrengungen benötigt.

Die natürlichen, historischen und wirtschaftlichen Potentiale Rußlands schaffen auf der einen Seite eine stabile Grundlage für langfristiges Wirtschaftswachstum. Auf der anderen Seite steht der Nutzung dieser Möglichkeiten eine Reihe von Hindernissen im Weg, die diese Nutzung eher theoretisch als praktisch möglich erscheinen lassen.

Political and Cultural Resources and Problems

by Archie Brown

The problems facing Russia today will bulk larger in my analysis than the resources, but it is worth beginning by looking on the positive side. Russia has, of course, great natural advantages but it also has resources which derive from past *policies*. Although the sheer size of Russia has its disadvantages - it exacerbates the problem of renewing the economic infrastructure and makes, for example, the task of agricultural reform, and getting produce to the market, far harder than in, say, Hungary or the Czech republic - the vastness of its Euro-Asian territories, and the geographical and geological variety this brings with it, also produces benefits. The fact that Russia has the richest natural resources of any country in the world provides one of the main grounds for long-term optimism about its prospects, however difficult the short- and medium-term may be.

So far as human capital is concerned, the Soviet legacy is mainly negative. The fact that virtually every social group - including, not least, the peasantry - had any independence knocked out of them in the period between the late 1920s and the mid-1980s was poor preparation for developing a post-Soviet market economy and for building (it is, to say the least, premature to speak of consolidating) a democratic polity. In general, it is fair to say - as became widely accepted even in the Soviet Union during the Gorbachev era - that the Bolshevik Revolution set Russia off on 'a road to nowhere' which it traversed for seven decades, and the mentality forged by the Communist system was scarcely conducive to the creation in post-Soviet Russia either of a large body of principled democrats or of an honest bourgeoisie. Furthermore, the connections and influence of the old nomenklatura, which have enabled a substantial proportion of those who were privileged under the Soviet system to emerge as winners also in the post-Soviet era, have helped to discredit in the eyes of a majority of the people - most of whom see themselves as losers in this brave new world - the ideas both of democracy and of a market economy.

Yet, if the Soviet Union had a wrongly-developed rather than under-developed economy, it had, nevertheless, a highly-developed educational system. The human capital, or cultural resources, this produced may be a declining asset, inasmuch as provision for state education has failed to keep up with rampant inflation and the private educational sector has come nowhere near filling the gap, but for the time being Russia benefits from having a population which is well-educated by world standards and includes a remarkably large number of people with a good-quality higher education, whether in the sciences or the arts. The social sciences were, in many respects, the poor relations of Soviet education, not so much because they were under-resourced as because of ideological constraints. Even there, however, in the post-Stalin period, and especially in the Gorbachev era, important work emanated from the research institutes, and the *institutchiki*, including not least the *mezhdunarodniki*, played an important role in the policy process in the second half of the 1980s.

The specialists who worked in the research institutes have been a valuable resource for the new commercial structures as well as for some of the governmental and quasi-governmental institutions in post-Soviet Russia. Even that positive fact has, however, its negative side. While the flight of talent, especially younger talent, from the institutes has been to the benefit of the commercial companies or other bodies they have joined, it has left the institutes themselves sadly depleted. In addition to their enormous financial problems, which have led many of them to rent out at least half of their office space to private companies (although, arguably, institutes such as

IMEMO were too large to start with), they have tended to lose some of their brightest people, including most of those under the age of forty.

For foreign companies thinking of investing in Russia there are many disincentives, among them political uncertainty, legal ambiguity, and fear of being the targets of extortion and violent crime. On the credit side, however, along with the richness of Russia's natural resources and the size of the potential market, is the possibility of finding a well-educated work-force. This applies particularly to those looking for professionals with a background in mathematics or physics or knowledge of foreign languages. The same assets are available to Russian entrepreneurs, although too few of them thus far have employed these talents in manufacturing industry as distinct from service industry and short-term trading. For the time being, though, the relatively high educational level of Russian citizens, especially the products of the Soviet *vuzy*, remains both a cultural and economic resource.

Among Russia's profound problems, however, are two which are interrelated: (1) the character of the political culture (more specifically, the relative weakness of a democratic political culture); and (2) the weakness of democratic institution-building and of respect for the rule of law. The second of these points, in particular, is also inseparable from that of leadership in post-Soviet Russia and from the return to a form of 'court politics'. In considering each of these problems in turn, the second will inevitably embody also an examination of Boris Yel'tsin's leadership style.

Political Culture

Disillusionment with the Soviet political and economic system grew apace during the last three to four years of the Soviet era. The critique of the system on the part of the reformist wing of the Communist Party leadership - including, most importantly, Mikhail Gorbachev - became increasingly fundamental,⁶⁴ while the 'radical democrats', among whom Yeltsin was to emerge as the *de facto* leader in Russia by 1990-91, were by definition even bolder in their denunciation of the system they had been living under, even though that system had itself undergone far-reaching change within a period of little more than five years.

Popular dissatisfaction with the Soviet system and a growing belief that Western countries provided the political and economic examples Russia should follow were a result of a number of features of the Gorbachev era, among them the growing freedom from fear over which he presided, the qualitative change for the better in the objectivity of the media of communication, the experience of participation in open political argument and in contested elections and, not least, the partial collapse of the Soviet economy. With the Soviet economic system in limbo by 1990-91, being not yet a market economy but already a 'command economy' in which commands were no longer obeyed, shortages grew worse rather than better. As a majority of newspapers and television programmes chose to stress the most positive features of Western European and North American societies, almost as much as they emphasised their most negative features up until the mid-1980s, growing attitudinal support for Western-style democracy was hardly surprising.

A number of optimistic articles about the democratic character of Russian political culture - an emphasis at odds with the conventional wisdom - appeared in Western journals at the beginning of the 1990s. One such author, Jeffrey W. Hahn, found that, so far as democratic orientations were concerned, there was little to choose between Russians and Americans and that the level of interest in politics was considerably higher in the sample of the Russian population he studied

⁶⁴ The development of Gorbachev's views over time and the sources of influence on him are among the themes of my book, *The Gorbachev Factor* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996).

than among American respondents. Hahn concluded: '...our Russian respondents ... showed substantial support for democratic values. A clear majority favoured competitive elections and a multi-party system and were highly interested in political life around them. On the whole, the picture of Russian political culture that emerges from this study is one not strikingly different from what is found in Western industrial democracies'.⁶⁵

Hahn's survey research was conducted in Yaroslavl' in March 1990, and it will be interesting to compare the findings over time if the survey is replicated in Yaroslavl' today.⁶⁶ There is, in fact, substantial evidence that the pro-democracy attitudes and enthusiasm for political participation of 1990-91 gave way quite early in the post-Soviet period to attitudinal change whereby 'democracy' and 'freedom' came far lower in the scale of values of the average respondent to surveys than they had in the last two years of the Soviet Union while support, above all, for 'order' and for a 'strong hand' became far greater. This, needless to say, is fully in keeping with the view of 'traditional' Russian political culture which Hahn and others were attempting to overturn.

It is too simple, however, to see this simply as a case of continuity. The return to more traditional manifestations of Russian political culture may equally well be seen as a rational response to the political behaviour of supposedly democratic politicians and to economic circumstances. If there is ample evidence that 'democracy' and 'democrats' have become terms of abuse in contemporary Russia, this may be an understandable reaction to the level of corruption in the Russian polity and to the unprepossessing behaviour of many of Russia's self-proclaimed 'democrats'. Similarly, since Western-style democracy was closely bound up in the minds of Soviet citizens in the last years of the USSR with the higher standard of living enjoyed in Western countries, the fact that the collapse of the Soviet Union has meant for a majority of Russians lower living standards, economic insecurity, fear of crime and a more general fear of the future has led to a reaction against the only 'democracy' most Russian citizens have lived through and a growing nostalgia for the Soviet Union. VTsIOM surveys in 1995 have shown a majority of respondents in Russia preferring even the pre-1985 Soviet Union to the present time and, most recently, a state-planned economy to a market economy. Although there are important generational differences (with stronger support for a market economy than a state-planned economy among those under the age of thirty) almost twice as many respondents rejected a market economy as favoured it in a major survey conducted in May 1995 and published in the autumn of that year.⁶⁷

Not all of these findings can be taken entirely at face value. It is unlikely that Russians would, in fact, take kindly to a return to the old Soviet economy with its extremely limited range of goods and foodstuffs, poor-quality products and empty shelves. Expressions of support for the unreformed Soviet system should be seen, rather, as indicators of the depth of dissatisfaction with the Russian present. While they may be interpreted in terms of 'rational choice' by Russian citizens who were offered a promised land and instead discovered new levels of deprivation, this need not be regarded so much as an alternative explanation of the changing orientation to politics from the political-cultural explanation as a reinforcing one.

⁶⁵ Jeffrey W. Hahn, 'Continuity and Change in Russian Political Culture', *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 21, Part 4, October 1991, pp. 393-421, at p. 420.

⁶⁶ In an interesting overview of more recent research, Robert J. Brym observes that 'survey researchers who dismissed the role of political culture in the early 1990s have made inaccurate predictions about the drift of Russian politics'. See Brym's paper, 'Some Problems in the Interpretation of Russian Political Culture', presented at the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, Washington, D.C., 28 October 1995. See also Gerhard Simon, 'Political Culture in Russia', *Aussenpolitik*, 111/95, pp. 242-252.

⁶⁷ *Ekonomicheskie i sotsial'nye peremeny: monitoring obshchestvennogo mneniya* (VTsIOM, Moscow), No. 5, September-October 1995, pp. 21-25, especially p. 22. More than a third of respondents found the question too difficult to answer.

Dramatic attitudinal change took place in Russia after 1985, especially between 1988 and 1991. But attitudinal change and value change should be distinguished from one another. While it seems clear that many Russians did change their values as well as more ephemeral attitudes over the past ten years, including some of the most important political actors of that period, it is much less clear that the values of the average citizen changed so much as been assumed by some of the writers on political cultural change in Russia.

More than twenty years ago, Milton Rokeach noted that when values change this is likely to be a more lasting shift than is the case with mere attitudinal change, and that the reason why the latter is often short-lived is that 'the more central values underlying them have been left intact'.⁶⁸ The distinction which Rokeach draws between attitudes and values is that whereas an attitude 'refers to an organization of several beliefs around a specific object or situation', a value 'concerns a desirable mode of behavior or end-state that has a transcendental quality to it, guiding actions, attitudes, judgements, and comparisons across specific objects and situations and beyond immediate goals ... a value is a standard but an attitude is not a standard. Favorable or unfavorable evaluations of numerous attitude objects and situations may be based upon a relatively small number of values serving as standards'.⁶⁹

It seems probable that the values and standards used by a majority of Russians to make judgements about their political experience and economic circumstances over the past four years have changed less dramatically than their attitudes did in the late 1980s and early 1990s. While there may have been no very good reason why they should have formed a strong attachment to democratic values on the basis of what they have personally experienced, it seems reasonably clear that as yet they have not. Even some of the former overt supporters of democracy who are among the 'winners' in post-Soviet Russia have changed their attitude to democracy, raising questions about the extent to which they ever truly internalised democratic values. Faced by the prospect that democratic elections may bring to power parliamentarians and (more worryingly) a president who might deprive them of their new wealth, they would prefer to see an indefinite postponement of elections in which Communists are likely to do well and which might bring a 'red-and-brown' alliance to power.⁷⁰ That is not to say that the possibility of an undemocratic regime being voted into power democratically presents anything other than a deeply troubling dilemma for democrats. But to abandon the democratic process and to retreat into authoritarian solutions cannot be the answer.

Democratic Institution-Building and the Rule of Law

It is difficult, as noted above, to separate the failures of democratic institution-building and the weakness of the rule of law in post-Soviet Russia from the leadership style and political disposition of Boris Yel'tsin. Of course, Yel'tsin had a difficult legacy to deal with. Many of the institutions he inherited had been only partially transformed over the preceding several years and, so far as the rule of law is concerned, respect for the law - not to mention an incorruptible and high-quality judiciary - could not be created overnight. But Yel'tsin's own measures and appointments have, to put it mildly, been far from optimal, and when democratic procedures and the supremacy of law have come into conflict with his drive to consolidate his personal power, the latter goal has prevailed. Western leaders, because they believe that Yel'tsin represents stability and that his

⁶⁸ Milton Rokeach, *The Nature of Human Values* (New York, 1973), p. 217.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 7.

⁷⁰ See Chrystia Freeland, 'Democracy on the critical list', *Financial Times*, 31 October 1995, p. 17; Freeland, 'Democracy indicted in the name of reform', *ibid.*, 7 November 1995, p. 3; and Freeland, 'Turn against the crimson tide', *ibid.*, 11/12 November, p. 7.

successor as Russian president is likely to be worse, have continued to proclaim that Yel'tsin is a democrat and - up until the onslaught on Chechnya - any action he took was defined as democratic on the basis of the circular argument that it was Yel'tsin, after all, who had taken it.

The post-Soviet Russian political system is certainly different from either the classical Soviet system or the reformed Soviet system of the post-1988 Gorbachev era. But one of a number of continuities is the great impact, for good or ill, that the top leader can make. Thus, while it is a very welcome change that Western scholars can now conduct surveys in Russia (usually in collaboration with Russian partners) on mass political attitudes, or undertake detailed studies of the legislature, it is important to continue to pay close attention to the executive which remains, as it has throughout Russian history, overwhelmingly the most important branch of government. And within the executive, Yel'tsin - when he is fit - wields far more power than anyone else, even though his uncertain health (by the end of 1995 he had suffered two heart attacks and had spent much time recuperating outside Moscow) means that there are lots of opportunities for those closest to him in the presidential apparatus to bite others with the president's teeth.

On the issue of Yel'tsin as an institution-builder, there are two ways to look at the problem. One is to say that - although he helped to give substance to political pluralism in the last three years of the Soviet Union and though he has important achievements to his credit as *de facto* Leader of the Opposition in 1990-91 - he has been much less effective as an institution-builder than as an institution-destroyer. The other is to consider the possibility that Yel'tsin did not, and does not, have the slightest intention of being an institution-builder - particularly, a democratic institution-builder. His aim, rather, has been to keep institutions other than the presidency weak. If that is his intention, he has been highly successful. It is not, however, a success conducive to advance of the democratization process or of the rule of law.

Yel'tsin is a hybrid politician - part-democrat, part-authoritarian - heading a hybrid political system, for Russia today has a form of government which combines arbitrary and democratic, as well as liberal and criminal, elements. Yel'tsin, in the second of his two volumes of memoirs (*The View from the Kremlin*) has said that 'perhaps being first was always a part of my nature'.⁷¹ Even during the brief part of his career when he was in opposition, he assumed the role of number one oppositionist. But he is more than used to wielding executive power, not least from his years as obkom first secretary in Sverdlovsk. In the exercise of his executive responsibilities as President of the Russian Federation, much of the democratic veneer of 1989-91 has worn off, the habits of the old party boss have reappeared, and the characteristics of a somewhat authoritarian personality, who demands absolute loyalty from those around him, have reasserted themselves.⁷²

The presidential apparatus is, in a number of respects, the functional equivalent of the old CPSU Central Committee apparatus, but much larger. (Indeed, the state bureaucracy in Russia today is as large as was the entire party-state bureaucracy for the whole of the Soviet Union.) Russia once again has a dual executive. Just as the most senior officials in the Central Committee apparatus enjoyed a greater power than, and could serve as a court of appeal from, the ministers in the Soviet system and the Secretariat of the Central Committee counted for more than the Council of Ministers, so the presidential apparatus today has become the *de facto* overlord of the government. Closeness to the president serves the same functions as closeness to the general secretary once did. A person in that vantage-point can wield a power disproportionate to his formal position.

⁷¹ Boris Yeltsin, *The View From the Kremlin* (HarperCollins, London, 1994), p. 179. Elsewhere he comments on his 'will to win' (*ibid.*, p. 117).

⁷² Yel'tsin himself has observed: 'For more than thirty years now, I've been a boss - that's exactly what people of my social class in Russia are called. Not a bureaucrat, not an official, not a director, but a boss' (*ibid.*, p. 179).

Decisions as important as those concerning which oil company will be granted the right to exploit important Siberian resources or whether the efficient acting head of the Central Bank, Tat'yana Parmanova, should be dismissed (as she was on 8 November 1995) would appear to have been made by one or other of Yel'tsin's close aides. In neither case, however, was it Yel'tsin's economic aide Aleksandr Lifshits who exercised the decisive influence. Indeed, when a decree was prepared for Yel'tsin to sign some weeks before his heart attack of late October granting the right to exploit rich Siberian oil reserves to the large Russian company, Rosснеft, Lifshits backed this decision of the prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, but the following day Yel'tsin signed a decree granting the concession to a recently-formed company believed to have links to the head of his personal security, Aleksandr Korzhakov. The suspicion arose that the struggle for control of economic resources was closely linked to the struggle for power and that the revenues would be used for various forms of political campaigning.⁷³

In some ways the most senior officials within the presidential administration - men such as Viktor Ilyushin, Sergey Filatov, Security Council Secretary Oleg Lobov and the head of Yel'tsin's guard, Korzhakov - are the equivalents of Secretaries of the Central Committee, although the functions of these new overlords of state administration overlap more with each other, and are less clearly delineated, than were, say, the functions of Suslov, Kirilenko, Chernenko and Gorbachev in Brezhnev's Politburo fifteen years ago.

The weakening of the legislature in the post-Soviet era and the failure to strengthen the judiciary must be regarded as serious failures of democratic institution-building. During 1992-93 the deterioration of relations between executive and legislature - beyond the point of useful checks and balances and reaching that of destructive hostility - was partly, but far from wholly, the fault of the Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, Ruslan Khasbulatov. But Yel'tsin handled his relations with the legislature badly. He gave some of his supporters there jobs within the executive, thus reducing the precarious majority he had enjoyed in the Russian Supreme Soviet in 1990-91. He did not spend time trying to win over waverers or opponents (as an American President does before a crucial vote) but talked only to his committed supporters within the legislature. He made enemies out of former allies (Khasbulatov and the then Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy being among the more notable examples) and turned tenuous majority support for him within the Supreme Soviet and Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation into a clear majority opposed to his continuing in the presidency.

The unconstitutional manner in which Yel'tsin then dispersed the legislature, first with his decree number 1400 in September 1993 and then by physical force in early October, the speed with which a new Constitution was drawn up, the blatant cheating which occurred in the December 1993 elections in order to produce a turnout of over 50 per cent (in the face of widespread apathy and political disillusionment) did nothing to strengthen democracy in Russia. Against that, it is arguable that, once things had been allowed to reach the point of acute confrontation of 3-4 October 1993, a victory then for the 'parliamentary' forces might have turned the clock back further to a substantially more authoritarian regime.

But the way in which the executive-legislature deadlock was ended in September-October 1993 added to the difficulty of establishing a rule of law and due process within Russian society. It was neither the first nor the last manifestation in Russia within the ranks of professed democrats (not to speak, of course, of overt authoritarians) of the belief that 'the end justifies the means'. A

⁷³ For accounts of the early stages of this battle, see Sergey Leskov, 'Krupnye politicheskie interesy stolknulis' v bor'be za sobstennost' neftyanykh kompaniy', *Izvestiya*, 31 August 1995, p. 1; and Leskov, 'Bor'ba za peredel nefyanoy sobstvennosti', *ibid.*, 1 September 1995, p. 2. See also John Thornhill, 'Yeltsin sacks acting central bank chief', *Financial Times*, 9 November 1995, p. 2.

similar attitude was displayed when the State Duma, elected in December 1993, exercised one of its relatively few prerogatives early in 1994 and amnestied those arrested at the Moscow White House in October 1993 as well as the jailed putschists of August 1991. Aleksey Kazannik, who had been Procurator-General for only a few months, and whose attachment to democracy and the rule of law was undoubted, implemented the decision of the State Duma and then resigned. He personally disagreed with the amnesty, but though he was against it on political grounds, he believed that it was in accordance with the Constitution and that, accordingly, he had no right to do other than comply with it. In a subsequent interview Kazannik related how, in a telephone conversation with the Russian President, he refused to accept Yel'tsin's instruction to him find a way of avoiding releasing the prisoners. Kazannik was not prepared to go along with the 'telephone law', whereby - as in Soviet times - politicians told the legal authorities how to interpret, bend or ignore the law.⁷⁴

Yel'tsin's decision not to form a political party but to see himself as being 'above party' was also an error in terms of democratic institution-building if the desideratum was the development of a viable party system (which would, indeed, appear to be a necessary component of democracy). Russia today has very few political parties worthy of the name, but many quasi-parties, pressure groups, leaders looking for followers, and other organisations claiming to be parties. A serious political party provides a leader with a power base, but to the extent that it is a democratic party, it can also act as a constraint upon his actions. Once again, it is a moot point whether Yel'tsin believed that it was more democratic for him to be 'above party' or simply that he would have a freer hand as president if he were not tied to a party.

Yel'tsin has been by no means the worst leader Russia could have had over these past few years, but his style of rule and the limitations in his commitment to the procedural aspects of democracy - his lack of understanding of the importance of means as well as ends in politics - have meant that his leadership has been in important respects deficient if the criterion for judgement is Russia's transition not only from Communism but to democracy.

As Timothy Colton has observed (in a volume he recently co-edited with Robert Tucker)⁷⁵, borrowing C.E. Lindblom's metaphor for Soviet planning of strong thumbs but no fingers, Yel'tsin has shown little of the dexterity needed by a democratic politician in office. 'He has', Colton remarks, 'made his niche in history by applying muscular thumbs and, one has to say, fists, to ram causes forward and brush aside obstacles'.⁷⁶

It is perhaps unavoidable that some of the political resources which Yel'tsin possessed in 1991 - widespread popular support and the prestige of one who had led the resistance to the attempted August coup - have been dissipated, for some of those who supported him (encouraged by contradictions in Yel'tsin's own rhetoric) were voting for a market economy and for more equality. The transition to the market, to the extent that it has occurred, was bound to be a painful process and almost bound to reduce the popularity of political incumbents.

That, however, does not in any way reduce the heavy responsibility on the shoulders of Russia's present leaders to preserve the progress towards democracy made over the past eight years. (The democratization process got seriously underway from the time of the Nineteenth Party Conference of the CPSU in the summer of 1988. Before that, even though Gorbachev used the

⁷⁴ In this interview Kazannik said: 'I tried to put an end to the policy of telephone law in relation to the Procurator-General' (*Komsomol'skaya pravda*, 18 March 1994, p. 7).

⁷⁵ Timothy J. Colton and Robert C. Tucker (eds.), *Patterns in Post-Soviet Leadership* (Westview Press, Boulder, 1995).

⁷⁶ Colton, 'Boris Yeltsin, Russia's All-Thumbs Democrat', *ibid.*, pp. 49-74, at p. 50.

term, 'democratization', what had occurred under his leadership was a liberalization.⁷⁷) In reality, though, democratization is under severe threat from the growing readiness both within the ranks of the 'party of power' and that of their most bitter opponents to seek authoritarian solutions to complex problems. Yel'tsin's ill-health could complicate the task of those around him who would like to find an excuse for postponing the presidential election and extend the current Russian president's mandate. It might yet, however, provide them with extra opportunities for acting in protection of their narrow group interests and finding a way of avoiding accountability to the electorate.

If the present dangerous phase in the development of post-Soviet Russia provides a test both of the political ingenuity and of the democratic credentials of the leading figures in Yel'tsin's entourage, it is a test also for the leaders of Western democracies. They too readily offered unconditional approval of Yel'tsin's forcible dissolution of the previous Russian legislature and his subordination of both legislature and judiciary to the executive. To praise Russian leaders for their commitment to democracy in the belief that they represent stability may actually help to undermine both democracy and stability. Democratic institutions and procedures need even more nurturing in the Russian context - given its political and cultural heritage - than the emerging markets. Ultimately, there is no economically viable alternative to some kind of market economy, but authoritarian regimes can come in many forms and guises.

⁷⁷ For elaboration of this point, see Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor*.

Russia's Military Resources

by Dmitri Trenin

The sight of the armed forces of the former superpower struggling for months to subdue a domestic separatist rebellion in a small mountainous region is pathetic, to say the least. Routine power cutoffs at Russian military facilities, including the headquarters of the Strategic Rocket Forces near Moscow, a regional military command in the Far East, and the nuclear submarine base on the Kola Peninsula, add to the description of the plight of the once so potent a force. Reduced, but unreformed, the Russian Armed Forces today represent a shadow of its predecessor.

This apparent misery stimulates calls to restore Russia's military might. With Gorbachevian emphasis on universal human values and Yeltsin's initial attempt at speedy integration into Western political and economic structures now generally believed to be wrong, or ineffectual, or both, it is traditional geopolitics, rather than liberal internationalism, that is becoming the intellectual guide for many in the Russian defense and security community.

To them, their country's periphery represents an arc of crisis stretching from Moldova and Crimea to the Caucasus to Central Asia. Beyond the "instability belt", these Russians increasingly see their country surrounded by states which can challenge her vital interests, national security and territorial integrity. Old adage may be coming back, namely, that, at the end of the day, Russia has only two true friends, her Army and her Navy.

With Russia's relations with the West at a critical moment, it has become popular in some quarters to point to the potentially beneficial effect of Russia's estrangement from her would-be partners. Official separation from the West with its alien values would allow Russia to formulate its new set of basic principles and values, which would help domestic stability and consolidation. Europe's division would leave Belarus, and possibly Ukraine, in the Russian sphere of influence; the Baltic States would be "finlandized". Russia will be able to proceed to re-integrate the CIS states in a confederacy, leading to a new federation. For the first time since the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, Russia will have allies or strategic partners, such as the Serbs in the Balkans, the Iranians and the Iraqis in the Middle East, the Indians in South Asia and the Chinese in the Far East. The long decay of the Russian military will be stopped and the tide will be reversed. The defense industrial complex will be saved both from collapse and conversion. As a Eurasian superpower, Russia will again be respected world-wide, and her relations with the West could be restored on a new, co-equal level.⁷⁸

This is not yet the official policy line, which remains apparently to try to save as much as possible of the Soviet defense heritage, while waiting for either an economic boom or a radical policy reversal. Both the conservationists and the revisionists, however, tend to overlook the issue of resources. Either those are regarded to be as abundant as they seemed to be during the Soviet era, or as being easily mobilized as they were under the Communist system. Both assumptions are erroneous. One has to take a hard look at Russia's current defenses resources, and only then proceed to formulate a credible strategy to protect the vital interests of the nation in view of the challenges which should not be minimized. This paper will attempt to compare ambitions and capabilities, and to sketch a way for Russia toward a balance between resources and policy goals.

⁷⁸ Cf., e.g. "Kontseptualnye polozheniya strategii protivodeistviya osnovnym vneshnim ugrozam natsionalnoy bezopasnosti Rossiyskoy Federatsii." A document by the Institute of Defense Studies (INOBIS). "Segodnya", 20 October 1995, p. 3.

One can hardly overestimate the importance of threat perception for the internal cohesion of the Soviet Union. Surrounded by "imperialist enemies", the "Fortress USSR" could have continued much longer than it did. Progressive détente with the West destroyed the glue which held the walled-in system together, and the walls came tumbling down not when the enemy was bombarding them, but when it was discovered that the enmity had been a gross mistake.

Ever since, first by Gorbachev, and later by Yeltsin, it has been held that, with the bipolar confrontation over, most of the threats which Russia faced were of domestic origin, and non-military in nature. The importance of military force was scaled down dramatically, and strengthening national security was viewed as more of an economic, political, demographic and ecological task than a military one.

So far, so good. Where the reformers went badly wrong was in the traditional military field. Instead of proceeding to thoroughly reform the military establishment to adapt it to the changing domestic and international environment, both political and economic, the new regime was content to leave the military alone, in exchange for its loyalty and political support.

The consequences of this neglect are extremely serious. Instead of economic prosperity, which so many politicians promised, Russia's crisis has grown worse. With a GNP of some \$ 741 bn, which places Russia 23rd among the countries of the world, and the foreign debt of \$ 120 bn, Moscow cannot hope to throw its economic weight around very much. With both the "outer" and "inner" empires, as well as the constituent republics of the USSR gone, Russia has no more political concessions to give. Recognizing this weakness, the Russian political elite, however, almost unanimously wants to preserve the country's great power status.

Under these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the importance of military force is being revised upward. Within the defense and security policy community, raw military might is seen, again, as the main element of Russia's position in the world. It is considered natural that "a great power, such as Russia, should also have numerically strong armed forces".⁷⁹

These ambitions of a general nature are strengthened by a new perception of threat. Gone are the days when Russian military had to accept, albeit grudgingly, the notion that Russia had no potential adversaries. Traditional logic is finding its way back, supported by such developments as NATO's first-ever massive use of force in Bosnia and the prospect of the Alliance's eastward enlargement, the rise of Turkey and Iran as regional powers, China's march toward attaining a first-order international position, and Japan's possible revision of her security policy. The conclusion seems clear: civilian pacifists have been proven wrong, and it is now up to the military professionals to correct the situation, while there is still time.

Following again a long tradition, the Russian military are sound most concerned over the revival of the threat from the West. They are skeptical about the prospects for NATO's transformation toward an essentially political alliance. Rather, they fear that NATO is about to take advantage of Russia's current weakness in order to marginalize it and to establish a US/NATO hegemony in Europe. To them, the war in Yugoslavia is an example of the continuing validity of military force. Falling somewhat short of declaring that "Right is might", they stress that "The weak are always wrong".

Conflicts on Russia's periphery are perceived as part of a grand design whose immediate purpose is to test Russia's capabilities, and the long-term one is to weaken and perhaps destroy Russia. Here is where, besides the U.S. and NATO, regional powers such as Turkey, Japan, China and

⁷⁹ Major General Borzenkov, of the General Staff. *Voyennaya reforma*. "Krasnaya Zvezda", 30 June 1995, p. 1.

Iran, come in. Territorial claims to Russia, conflicts involving the new independent states may result in Russia becoming drawn in local or regional wars.⁸⁰

Thus, the Russian military strategy calls for attaining a capability "to reliably repel aggression by any potential adversary in a regional war while deterring attack from other strategic directions".⁸¹ This goes beyond a "Gaullist posture" which some military professionals and political analysts⁸² advocated in the past. The proponents of a "strong defense" have advanced considerably to alter the perceptions of decisionmakers. Are there military resources, however, for simultaneously taking on the West, the Turkic-Islamic challenge, and China?

In the postwar Soviet Union, the needs of defense reigned supreme in the eyes of the government. Vast resources were marshalled to counter all perceived external threats. The cost factor was ignored as a matter of principle. "My za tsenoy ne postoi" ("We are willing to pay any price"), the famous phrase went. As Vladimir Lukin, the Chairman of the Duma's international affairs committee argued as recently as September 1995, the Russians "are at their best when they are cornered". This is borne out, of course, by both Patriotic Wars, of 1812 and 1941-1945. But what if the situation is not of that kind, if it is closer to those of the Crimean War of 1853-1856 or the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905? The answer is not obvious.

The Soviet Union collapsed not only because the siege of the Cold War was lifted. No less important a factor was overextension. The USSR's resources were not enough to ensure "security" against all potential enemies. The Soviet leadership spent around 15 per cent of the nation's GNP on defense, and yet the combined conventional forces of the U.S., NATO, Japan and China far outnumbered those of the Soviet Union and its allies and clients by a factor of four. The gap in capabilities was even greater.

This was clearly realized by the forces of reform in Russia. The end of the Soviet Union ushered in practical demilitarization of Russian society. This has proceeded far enough. But what if the trend were to be reversed? Can Russia succeed where the Soviet Union failed?

It is true that Russia is the richest country, in terms of natural resources, among the world's emerging economies.⁸³ Effective exploitation of those resources, however, appears difficult in the short and medium term.

The Russian resource base is much smaller than that of the Soviet Union. In 1990, Russia accounted for 61 per cent of the Soviet GDP. In 1992, the GDP fell by 18.5 per cent, in 1993, by 12 per cent, in 1994 by another 15 per cent. 1995 is another year of negative growth. Thus, the current Russian GDP is only 36 per cent of the last Soviet figure. Even if economic stabilization is achieved and 1996 turns out the first year of moderate positive growth, the forecasts suggest that until the end of the decade the Russian economy will not grow faster than 5 per cent a year. Thus, the 1990 Soviet level will only be achieved well into the next century.

Political changes in Russia have already led to a new "correlation of forces" in the ruling elite, with the military and military industrial lobbies losing ground to other interest groups. IMF estimates the Russian defense expenditure in 1992-1995 as between 4.4 and 5.0 per cent of the

⁸⁰ Cf., e.g., Col.General Victor Barynkin, Chief of the Main Operational Directorate of the Russian General Staff. *Grozyat li Rossii voyny?* "Krasnaya Zvezda", 1 November 1995, p. 2.

⁸¹ Barynkin, 1 November 1995.

⁸² Such as Vyacheslav Nikonov, of the State Duma.

⁸³ With \$ 10.2 trln it is way ahead of Brazil (3.3 trln), South Africa (1.1 trln), China (0.6 trln) and India (0.4 trln). Cf. Lev Makarevich. *Inostrannye investitsii sledyat za peremenami v Rossii i zhдут itogov vyborov parlamenta i prezidenta.* "Finansovye Izvestiya", No. 85 (214), 3 November 1995, p. III.

GDP,⁸⁴ a decline by the factor of 3 as compared with the Soviet era. Interestingly, although the communists, their allies and the nationalists make up the bulk of the Russian parliament, the legislature is hardly more sympathetic to the needs of the military than is the government. The agrarians, for instance, have emerged as by far the most formidable competitors of the defense complex for state funds.

The MOD also faces increasingly strong competition for scarce resources from the other "power ministries". Current perceptions among the members of the Russian political elite tend to emphasize the domestic, rather than outside, threat to Russia's integrity and stability.⁸⁵ While the Armed Forces are being drawn down, "other troops", first of all those under the Interior Ministry, the Federal Border Service and the various security services, are rapidly growing in strength. With 29 divisions numbering 800,000 men, the Interior Troops are roughly one-half of the Armed Forces.⁸⁶ The military resent this, calling a situation of "two armies" for one country too costly. The commanders of the "second army", however, have a very solid support base, which is unlikely to erode soon.

The defense budget reflects these changes. The 1996 draft budget calls for a further relative decrease of the defense spending, from 21.3 to 17.9 per cent of all federal expenses, or from 5.5 to 3.8 per cent of the GDP. Nothing short of a political revolution is required to make defense again a favorite son of the State. Even the funds allocated to the military do not fully reach the Armed Forces. As of October 1995, the MOD debt to suppliers amounted 12 trln roubles, or over \$ 2.5 bn.

Equally worrisome for the professional military is the structure of the budget. Most of the outlays are being spent on military pay, pensions, housing, and other social needs. The share of procurement is down to 10 per cent of the defense funding, as compared to 45 per cent in Soviet times. Russian military officers call this a "survival budget". This situation, too, is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

Russia is yet to experience a peace dividend resulting from arms control agreements. So far, these have weighed heavily on its budget. To implement the CFE Treaty, Russia has had to eliminate 3,300 tanks, 5,800 AICVs, 830 artillery systems, 840 combat aircraft and 60 attack helicopters. Substantial funds have to be found to eliminate the large quantities of equipment moved by the USSR behind the Urals. Under START 1, Russia has eliminated 513 missile launchers, 17 SSBNs, 58 heavy bombers.⁸⁷ Utilization of nuclear-powered submarines has become a major problem for urgency of the situation and the lack of money. The unprecedented withdrawal of about 700,000 Russian troops from Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and Mongolia, as well as from some NIS, has become an additional drain on dwindling resources.

Peacemaking activities of the Russian military in the "near abroad", which have been going on since 1992, are considered to be relatively inexpensive, except for the case of Tajikistan. The war in Chechnya, however, has cut deep into the military budget, compelling the General Staff to rechannel the funds which it had intended to use for social needs and forces development. The Defense Ministry's hopes of getting special "war funds" in the 1995 budget were resolutely thwarted by the Prime Minister.

⁸⁴ The Military Balance. 1995-1996. L., 1995, p. 112.

⁸⁵ Cf., e.g., Yuri Baturin: Vnutrennikh ugroz bezopasnosti Rossii bolshe, chem vneshnikh. "Segodnya", 14 October 1995, p. 2.

⁸⁶ Nikolai Troitski. Armiya dlya vnutrennego upotrebleniya. "Obshchaya Gazeta", No. 14 (90), 6-12 April 1995, p. 8.

⁸⁷ Col. General Victor Barynkin. Kogda armiya na polozhenii pasynka. "Krasnaya Zvezda", 2 November 1995, p. 2.

The military's complaints are real, but it can not be denied that the scarce resources are being used less than efficiently. First of all, the MOD budget requests are totally unrealistic and fail to take into account the nation's resources, asking twice as much than they are eventually authorized to spend. Second, there is little parliamentary control over the way the money is being spent. Until 1995, the National Defense budget had only six categories of spending.⁸⁸ The 1996 budget has 18⁸⁹. The Budget Committee of the Duma aspires to broaden that number to 100, to include armed services, branches within each service, and military districts, fleets, etc., which would make the budget fully transparent.

To sum it up, Chris Donnelly's calculations suggest that Russia is currently spending only 1/14 of that expended by the USSR on defense, and allocating 1/82 as much to military procurement.⁹⁰

These hard realities have dispelled the recent illusions of creating a powerful modern force by the year 2005. This has led many officers to conclude that no real military reform is possible and that the MOD should try to salvage as much as it can from what was left of the Soviet Armed Forces, in anticipation of a new situation. Some defense industry managers seem to have arrived at a similar conclusion. Both are wrong. In fact, the sorry financial state of the Russian defense complex should encourage the military reform, rather than postpone it.

The 1992 Law on Defense puts a ceiling on the strength of the Armed Forces, which should not exceed 1 per cent of the population. From mid-1992 till mid-1995, the authorized strength of the Russian Armed Forces was reduced by about 1 million, to reach 1,917,400.⁹¹ In actual fact, the real strength of the forces may be around 1.5 million, i.e. within the limit established by law. Recently, however, the top military officers have become openly questioning this ceiling, claiming that it was too low for Russia.

The shortage of conscripts has become a virtual plague of the Russian armed forces, with all the implications for their combat readiness. Even the airborne troops, with 85 per cent of their authorized strength the best force in Russia, can rely on not more than one-third of its soldiers in any emergency. The one political victory won by the military in the wake of Chechnya has been to rewrite the conscription law to extend the length of service from 18 to 24 months. This should have added another 200,000 men to the Armed Forces' strength. More flexibility was shown as to the age of draft, to allow post-college conscription. Thus, all university graduates will in future serve as EM and NCOs, rather than officers, as some of them did in the past.

In the long term, however, this measure will amount to little. The pool of potential draftees continues to decrease at an ever faster rate, and their physical condition tends to deteriorate. In the early 2000s, the intake may reach an all-time low: Russia's demographics is a near-catastrophe. Even now, about two-thirds of the Russian border troops in Tajikistan are local Tajiks. Similar situations exist in Georgia and Armenia, thus making the Russian army on the borderlands look somewhat like an old colonial army. Under the current circumstances, this is hardly an enviable situation.

The lack of a solid body of professional NCOs is one of the Russian army's more salient weaknesses. Despite some effort, the MOD has failed to attract, and to keep, high-quality contract

⁸⁸ Personnel costs; Construction; Procurement; Research and Development; Military pensions; Ministry of Atomic Energy.

⁸⁹ Including, among others, Military Pay; Alimentation; Clothing.

⁹⁰ Chris Donnelly. *The Future of Russian National Security Policy and Military Strategy. The Nuclear and Conventional Dimension*. Donnelly/CND (95) 464. September 1995, p. 16.

⁹¹ Pavel Grachev, as quoted by "Krasnaya Zvezda", 25 June 1995, p. 1.

soldiers. For the moment, the high command's resources were just enough to pay the contractees half the salary they were legally entitled to.

The officer corps is deteriorating. Junior officers are few, and often of inferior quality. Among the staff officers, the best and the brightest are leaving the armed forces to take much better-paid jobs in civilian economy. The overhang of pension-age officers, whom it is cheaper to keep than to retire, is growing.⁹²

Lastly, the ostensibly large reserves have even larger problems. No callups of reservists have been held since 1991. As a result, in the words of a military analyst, "the Russian army has ceased to be a classical mobilization army... At the same time, however, it has failed to become a modern professional army".⁹³

The Russian army may cease to become modern in another way as well. In the words of the Chief of the Russian General Staff, modern weapons account for only 30 per cent of the Russian arsenal, compared with 70 per cent in the countries of Western Europe. If the present trends continue, in 2000 and beyond the Russian forces will use only obsolete weapons.⁹⁴

The state of the Russian defense industry is often described as close to collapse. With the state order for arms and equipment a small fraction of what it used to be in the 1980s, conversion proceeding with enormous difficulty, and the expectations of earning as much as \$ 20 bn a year through foreign arms sales revealed as totally unfounded,⁹⁵ the defense industry finds it extremely hard to adapt to the market conditions. Its technological and production capabilities are rapidly declining. Also, in spite of Russia inheriting around four-fifths of the Soviet defense industrial assets, the level of self-sufficiency of the Russian defense industry in 1992 did not exceed one-fifth. Thus, the real industrial and technological potential of Russia's defense is far less than what it may appear, even to some within the military. The rate of aging of the Russian military arsenal is virtually avalanche-like.⁹⁶

Thus, it is hardly surprising that, more than ever, the nuclear weapons are regarded as bedrock of Russia's military security and the only real justification of her claims to a great-power status, in the military field. Russia's strategic arsenal, however, is aging, and may be less valuable as a political tool in the post-Cold War situation.

Not just the lack of resources is responsible for the failure, so far, of military reform in Russia.

To an even larger extent, it is the lack of political leadership. Civilian authorities in Russia have not been willing, or able, to address the reform issue seriously. Despite President Yeltsin's statement in his State of the Nation address of 16 February 1995, nothing has changed.⁹⁷ The Soviet pattern of the politician/statesman ignorant in defense issues and requiring, primarily, the military's support to stay in power, and largely abandoning the "technical" component of the military doctrine to the professional soldier, remains very much in force. The important

⁹² Retirement costs for officers equal their pay for 4 or 5 years. Cf. Barynkin, "Krasnaya zvezda", 2 November 1995.

⁹³ Pavel Felgenhauer. Rossiyskaya armiya i voennyi balans mezhdru Vostokom i Zapadom. "Segodnya", 18 August 1995, p. 3.

⁹⁴ "Krasnaya Zvezda", 13 April 1995, p. 1.

⁹⁵ In 1994, Russia exported \$ 1.7 bn worth of arms, in 1995 - \$ 2.5. Cf. Anatoli Sautin. Russkoye oruzhie stremitsya na mirovye rynki. "Finansovye Izvestiya", No. 82 (211), 27 October 1995, p. 1.

⁹⁶ Army General Mikhail Kolesnikov, the Chief of the General Staff. Voennoye stroitelstvo kak neot'yemlemaya chast' stanovleniya rossiyskoy gosudarstvennosti. "Krasnaya Zvezda", 30 September 1995, p. 3.

⁹⁷ For the text of the address, cf. Rossiyskaya gazeta, 18 February 1995.

difference is that now the military are not provided with, in their view, even barely adequate funding, which adds to their frustration. This lack of clear guidance from the political masters makes the military instinctively wary of changes which could destroy the old structures without at the same time building new ones. Simply stabilizing the defense expenditure at around 5.5-6 per cent of the GDP, for fear of a social explosion⁹⁸, will simply put off the hard decisions, and at a high cost.

The longer this protective trend continues, the longer Russia will have an oversize force for her resources, which at the same time will be so poorly trained and so badly equipped, as to be ineffective for her real security needs. The decay of the Russian military might will continue, leading eventually to a major social and political crisis.

The intention to build a force, equalling 60 to 80 per cent of the Soviet strength, also doomed to failure, will bring about this crisis much quicker. Turning the Finance Ministry into a public enemy No. 1, and even defeating it, will achieve little. An authoritarian option will have to be exercised, leading to a deepening of Russia's crisis. But even if successful, the new autocrats will have to realize that this is a mission impossible. In order to build a force two-thirds of the size of the Soviet armed forces, one would have to surpass the Soviet defense effort, which is financially unsustainable now or in the foreseeable future. Nuclear blackmail will probably emerge as the only feasible instrument of this policy. This, of course, is a clear recipe for disaster. A disaster, it could be added, provoked by a pursuit of a false goal. The Soviet Union's enormous military might failed to forestall its ultimate disintegration.

Many Russians currently believe that their country stands before a robust take-off or final disintegration. Fearing the latter, they hope for the former. The reality may be more complicated. The Russian Federation will probably not follow the path of the USSR, but instead of a vigorous boom it would have to spend several more years muddling through the transition. In the long run Russia could achieve stability and indeed become one of the future centers of power, alongside with the United States and Canada; the European Union; China; and Japan. In this capacity, she will act as a natural center of gravity in Central Eurasia, i.e., the former Soviet Union.

If that is the long-term goal, and there appears to be a consensus among the Russian ruling elite that, in the words of General Leonid Ivashov, "the final loss of a great power status is fraught with negative consequences for Russia",⁹⁹ then Russia should develop and practice a policy of concentration, exactly opposite to that of its traditional expansion. In other words, in order to be "great" again, the Russian Federation will have to keep superpowerism and imperialism safely discarded and act very differently from both the USSR and the Russian Empire.

The military force will be an important instrument of assuring national security, but not the primary one by far. This is a lesson from Soviet history absolutely to be learnt. In view of the very limited resources, Moscow will have to wage an extremely economical defense and security policy.

Russia can not afford to turn itself into a new fortress. It has to reassess its security situation. Of the three geostrategic facades, the Western one, despite all the polemics over NATO enlargement, is actually ready for full demilitarization, a policy goal clearly within reach. Whatever the problems between Russia and the West, these could be managed without a threat to use force. To

⁹⁸ As suggested, among others, by Nikolai Gonchar of the Federation Council, in an interview with the RTR Russian Television, on 29 October, 1995.

⁹⁹ Lieutenant General Leonid Ivashov. *Rossiia mozhnet snova stat' sverkhderzhavoy*. "Nezavisimaya gazeta", 7 March 1995, p. 3.

do the opposite, i.e. help restore quasi-confrontation with the West through a military buildup in western Russia, bolstering Belarus and Kaliningrad as forward-deployment areas, applying pressure on Ukraine to join in while threatening the Baltic States, and placing greater emphasis in the forces doctrine on tactical nuclear weapons, while developing strategic nuclear forces outside of the framework of U.S.-Russian agreements would not only be extremely costly, but could effectively send Russia down the slope once traveled by the USSR.

In the South, conflict and instability will continue, putting Russian interests at risk, though not in the traditional way of external invasion. Various peace operations will become a hallmark of Russian diplomatic and military activity. Russia will need to practice a careful mix of diplomacy and force to protect what she regards as vitally important. For this, Moscow will need an active strategy in the NIS and a power-projection capability with some presence on the ground. Comparatively light, but highly mobile forces, relying on adequate infrastructure, will be required.

It is the East, of course, which in the long term may present the most serious challenge to Russia. As China develops, by 2010-2020 it is likely to become, besides an economic superpower, a military one as well, while Russia's grip on her own Far Eastern provinces is loosening. This challenge can not be met through military means alone. Domestic, including inter-regional, consolidation, and international diplomacy are the main instruments to be used. Still, the Russian military capabilities in the Far East should be seen as a credible deterrent.

As to allies, Russia would do better by dropping the talk of a 'politico-military alliance of the CIS states'. An upgraded Tashkent treaty which looks like Warsaw Pact Mark 2 will saddle Russia with weak and unstable allies, which would be net consumers of security, and of Russia's resources.

Instead of a pan-CIS structure, which is unworkable and probably unnecessary, Russia should concentrate on strengthening ties to the countries which are of key importance to Russia's security. These include Belarus in Eastern Europe; Georgia and Armenia in the Caucasus; and Kazakhstan in Central Asia. With these four formal allies, Russia can effectively protect her security interests in all three newly emerging regions. Relations with other CIS countries will include a sizeable military component, such as a joint air defense system or border defense agreements, or defense industrial cooperation, technical assistance, officer training, etc., but they will fall short of an alliance.

Military allies beyond the CIS are out of question, at least for the time being. Alliances with the international outcasts like Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea would result in Russia itself becoming an outcast and squandering her resources in an irresponsible attempt at revisionism. Russia, however, should move beyond declarations and start to build security partnerships with the U.S., NATO, and the EU/WEU, thus helping the latter's transformation. Common interest in nuclear non-proliferation and conflict management will provide a solid base for such partnerships. Building up the OSCE as the mainstay of the all-European security system can only be regarded as a long-term goal. An OSCE security treaty, even if concluded now, would hardly add to the security landscape in a meaningful way. An all-European security arrangement will probably grow out of a network of partnerships, rather than be the result of a sole solemn treaty.

In Asia, India appears a good candidate for a security partnership, and North-East Asia is a region where Russia should cooperate with other major Asia-Pacific powers in an attempt to construct a regional security network. On the other hand, a search for "security partners" in

places like South-East Asia, East Asia and Asia-Pacific¹⁰⁰, may turn out to be disappointing and costly.

Overall, moderation and a choice of quality rather than quantity appear to be the obvious demand of the times, although this may sound very unorthodox in Russian conditions. Concentration on retaining core assets and capabilities of each military service, such as the corps of professional soldiers, the main armaments and material, the command and control system and the essential infrastructure.

In each service, the most combat ready units must be identified and built up through raising the quality of personnel and modernizing their weapons on a priority basis. The number of military units, garrisons, academies and facilities, a huge drain on resources, has to be drastically cut. The Mobile Forces which can be rapidly deployed anywhere on the perimeter of Russia's 61,000 km-long borders, are a viable idea to be actively pursued. As a result, Russia may have a relatively small force (even less than 1 million strong), which nevertheless will be more effective than the current army.

Despite the initial setbacks, the process of professionalization of the Russian forces should continue, with the aim of building a corps of professional NCOs. The proportion of conscripts to contractees among the EM and NCOs, to stay approximately 7 to 3 until the year 2000, has to be progressively lowered. What is most important, however, is not the ratio itself, but whether and when a body of professional NCOs will emerge. Better training of all soldiers, through exercises and simulators, is the essence of professionalization.

If draft is to remain for the foreseeable future, the conditions of military service have to be improved. An early enactment of the law on alternative service would free the soldiers from non-essential tasks.

The growth of the interior forces and security services must be kept in check. Better coordination between the Armed Forces and "other troops" is a must, as Chechnya showed. This will mean liquidating some redundancies in command posts.

Restoring the Soviet industrial mobilization base is a wrong path to pursue. Rather, the military industrial complex must be further restructured, with its non-converted sector given orders to develop and produce technologically advanced weapons and C3I systems. Defense research and development should be given enough resources not just to survive, but to keep/regain its advance level. Thus, the unique technological potential of Russia's defense complex can be preserved. Full self-sufficiency in defense production is uneconomical, and Russia could well engage in cooperation with other CIS countries.

Lastly, the arms procurement process is in need of streamlining and centralizing by making the MOD the sole purchaser of weapons, and assigning the Economic Ministry coordinating powers.

At the moment, Russia has no resources to be a military superpower on the scale of the USSR. It is unable to project power beyond the borders of the NIS. Over time, however, her resources may allow the Russian Federation to build relatively small but highly effective modern forces which capable of protecting Russia's national interests as well as stability in many of Eurasia's regions. Unless those resources are squandered in search of obsolete or unattainable goals, Russia can again become one of the world's major military powers. Concentration can make it happen; expansion will certainly wreck it.

¹⁰⁰ Defense Minister Pavel Grachev speaking at the Greek National Defense Academy. "Krasnaya Zvezda", 1 November 1995, p. 3.

Russia a World Power? - Experiences, Perspectives, Options

by Klaus-Peter Klaiber

With the East-West confrontation having been consigned to the past we now have the chance to end Europe's division once and for all and create a new, free and united continent. Only an outward-looking, stable and democratic Russia can be a reliable support for a pan-European peaceful order and a capable economic partner.

What is Russia's role in Europe? What should be the nature of her relations with the European states and institutions? These questions have been a source of discussion in Russia for centuries.

In my view there can be but one answer. Russia is part of Europe. The historical and cultural roots of our ties with that country are deep. Hardly anywhere else are the works of Tolstoy, Dostojevsky and Chekov, Chaikovsky and Stravinsky more greatly appreciated than in Germany.

We want a close, trustful partnership with Russia. But Russia must herself determine where her place in Europe, in the world, is to be. Russia is in the midst of a comprehensive social and cultural transformation. Enlightened and reactionary tendencies exist side by side. The Russian people have not yet decided which way they intend to go.

The Russians have achieved remarkable progress since the collapse of communism. Today they can freely decide their own future. Democracy and market economy have taken root. The vitality of this process and the people's ability to adapt to change are remarkable. I am therefore confident that Russia will stay the course and create a modern democracy with a market economy.

But everyone knows that the road will be long and stony. The people are required to make great sacrifices. Many have lost a great deal and feel humiliated. Russia has not only experienced 70 years of communist dictatorship but 700 years of authoritarian rule. The transition from such a long phase of dependence into a liberal society will not be easy. There will be setbacks and the road will not always be straight and narrow.

For the sake of peace in Europe it is extremely important that Russia's aspiration to greatness does not cause her to branch off into excessive nationalism. It is my hope that the Russians will focus on the country's inner rehabilitation. Russia will only become strong if her economy flourishes.

We are looking forward with eager expectation to the upcoming parliamentary elections, but not without some concern as well. We hope that the democratic and market economy reforms can be kept on course. It is crucial to the young Russian democracy that the elections take place in an orderly fashion. We are glad that "Jábloko" and "Derscháva" are being allowed to take part in the elections after all.

Obviously, Russia must build her future on the basis of her own values and experiences and of her own cultural history. No country can simply ignore its historical roots. Each nation needs its identity, its self-respect. But it is also obvious that there must be no historical determinism! Particularly we Germans realize that a country's self-perception and political culture can change dramatically in a very short time.

Fifty years after the Second World War the nations of Europe have the opportunity to build a peaceful order for the whole of Europe. Our vision is a system of cooperative security in which the existing organizations - OSCE, EU, WEU and NATO - will have their place. Security is not

only a question of weapons. It grows from the ever closer integration of our economies and societies.

Our objective is to establish security *with* and not against Russia. We don't want to isolate Russia - she could, at worst, only do this herself. Russia must sense that she belongs to Europe:

1. through developing a political and economic partnership with the European Union. The cooperation agreement with Russia has entered into force. I hope that the negotiations on her accession to the Council of Europe will make steady progress.
2. Through a special security partnership with NATO. By joining in the Partnership for Peace, the Russian government has paved the way for a strategic partnership with NATO. Foreign Minister Kinkel has proposed a Charter between NATO and Russia which would provide for special consultative arrangements and renunciation of force, joint peace-keeping operations and closer cooperation in the field of arms control. This must now be vigorously pursued. The sooner such a partnership is established, the sooner Russia will be able to overcome her fear of contact with NATO.

An important practical test of this cooperation will be the peace-keeping force for Bosnia. I am glad, that a flexible formula has been found for the participation of Russian forces in IFOR, which provides for the necessary efficiency of the command structure.

For NATO's enlargement we need a "soft landing". It should be cooperative and evolutionary, prudent and transparent. NATO is a threat to no one; its enlargement is not directed against Russia. It is not a question of creating new spheres of influence but of securing a larger measure of stability in the region between us. That is in Russia's interest as well.

3. Russia needs a secure place in the Group of Seven. Cooperation was given a broader framework at the Halifax summit. Russia must now be enabled to play a full part in the process of international cooperation.
4. The OSCE's potential should be fully exploited in the course of restructuring Europe's security architecture. Germany and Russia in particular have been calling for a stronger OSCE for some time. Specifically, the OSCE should be given the status of an international organization with the ability to introduce its own peace-keeping measures. Its decision-making procedures need to be improved.

To have a political partnership we must be willing and able to speak openly with one another. I therefore make no secret of my concern about certain trends:

- Elements of the "old thinking" are resurfacing. We again hear talk of "spheres of influence" and "balance of power", when we hoped that the thought-patterns of the 19th century had been discarded.
- No one disputes Russia's right to preserve her territorial integrity, but the war in Chechnya has violated international law, human rights and OSCE commitments.
- In Russia one frequently hears that Russia is something special. No question about that! But aren't Portugal, Austria and Estonia something special as well? No country can claim special *rights* by virtue of its special character.

International law and OSCE standards are the binding foundations of trustful cooperation in Europe. No European country should jeopardize that basis of trust. Moscow must respect its contractual obligation to return cultural property. Together we must find a way to allow the CFE

treaty to enter into force. *Pacta sunt servanda* - this principle must apply to the largest country on earth as well.

This includes respect for the sovereignty of the democratic states in Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic, Ukraine and the other CIS states. Last weekend I was in Bad Ems which, as you know, was an Eldorado for Europe's high society, including Russia's, in the latter half of the 19th century. By chance I came across a memorial plaque on the wall of a beautiful 17th century building indicating that Czar Alexander II had lived there in 1876 and signed what became known as the "Ems Decree" prohibiting the use of the Ukrainian language. That was 120 years ago and should never again be repeated.

After five years of recession OECD and IMF now see genuine signs of a change for the better in the Russian economy. We want closer economic cooperation with Russia. The European Union today accounts for nearly 40% of Russia's external trade, which is ten times as much as her trade with America. Germany is Russia's main trading partner with a trade volume of 24 billion marks.

But the volume and structure of her external trade do not reflect Russia's size and potential. Her exports depend too heavily on raw materials. The important thing now is to create better general conditions for foreign investment. In 1994 German companies invested no more than 110 million marks there. But billions would be available if only the legal, tax and bureaucratic obstacles could be removed.

In conclusion just a few thoughts on our future cooperation. The pluralization of society and the progress being achieved through reform in my view require the further development of our cooperation strategy:

1. We need a consistent long-term strategy which relates not so much to persons, parties and individual reform measures but to the whole process of transforming and opening up Russia's society.
2. In addition to government representatives we should also enable other groups to play a larger part in our mutual cooperation: political parties, regional elites, groups with economic interests, non-governmental organizations, etc. Greater encouragement should be given to partnerships of all kind, to cooperation with regions and local authorities.
3. Economic cooperation should focus on specific projects and regional development.
4. We should bring other strategic sectors into the cooperative arrangement as well, for instance health and social affairs, environmental protection, vocational training and the free media. Why don't we provide a German or European prize for Russian journalists similar to the Pulitzer Prize?

Today we have the great opportunity to build a Europe of good neighbourliness and cooperation. Germany will make every effort to gain Russia a worthy and appropriate place in that Europe.